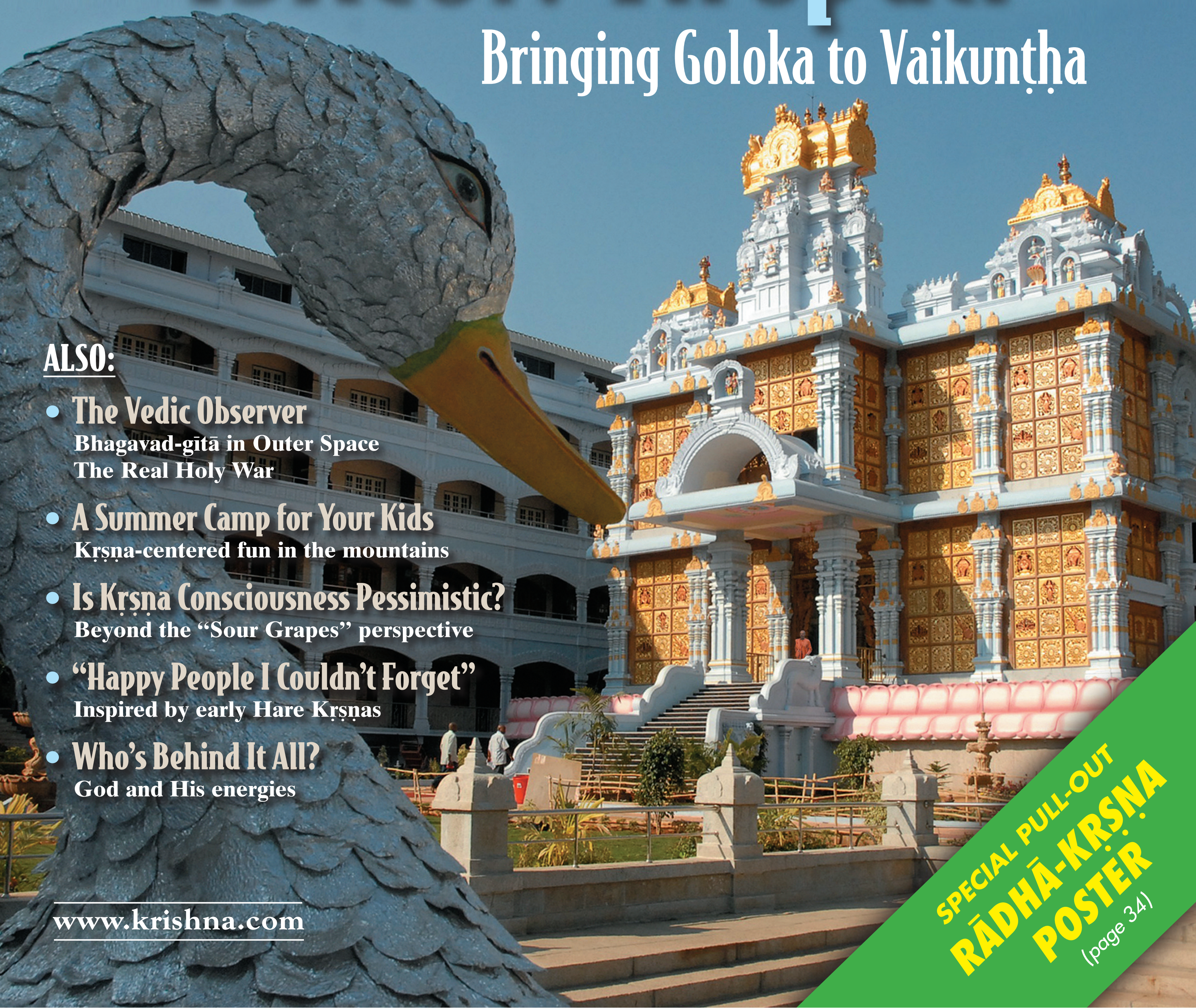
Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience.

BACK TO GODHEAD

The Magazine of the Hare Krishna Movement • July/August 2007 • $4.50/£2.50

ISKCON Tirupati

Bringing Goloka to Vaikuṇṭha



ALSO:

- **The Vedic Observer**
  Bhagavad-gītā in Outer Space
  The Real Holy War
- **A Summer Camp for Your Kids**
  Kṛṣṇa-centered fun in the mountains
- **Is Kṛṣṇa Consciousness Pessimistic?**
  Beyond the "Sour Grapes" perspective
- **"Happy People I Couldn't Forget"**
  Inspired by early Hare Kṛṣṇas
- **Who's Behind It All?**
  God and His energies

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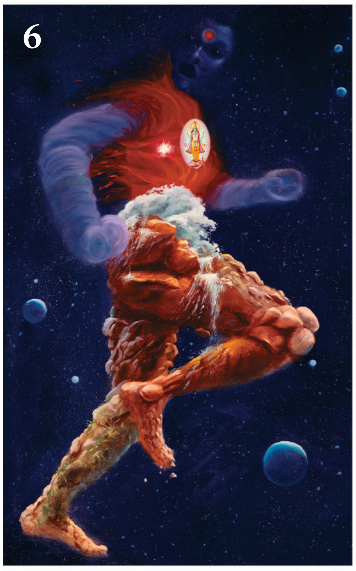
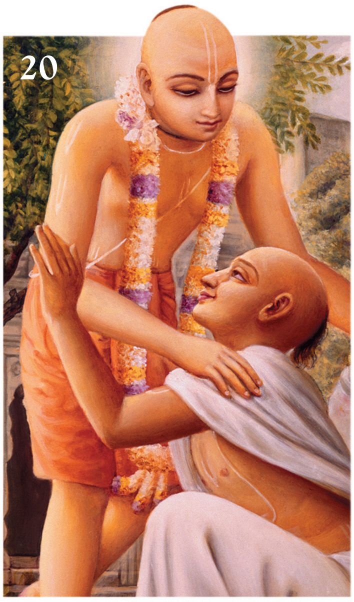
SPECIAL PULL-OUT
RĀDHĀ-KṚṢṆA
POSTER
(page 34)

Assisting you in your quest for the Absolute Truth

Back to Godh

Founded 1944 • Vol. 41, No. 4 • July / August 2007





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A new Hare Kṛṣṇa temple at one of India's greatest pilgrimage sites showcases the special devotion of Lord Caitanya's line.

ead

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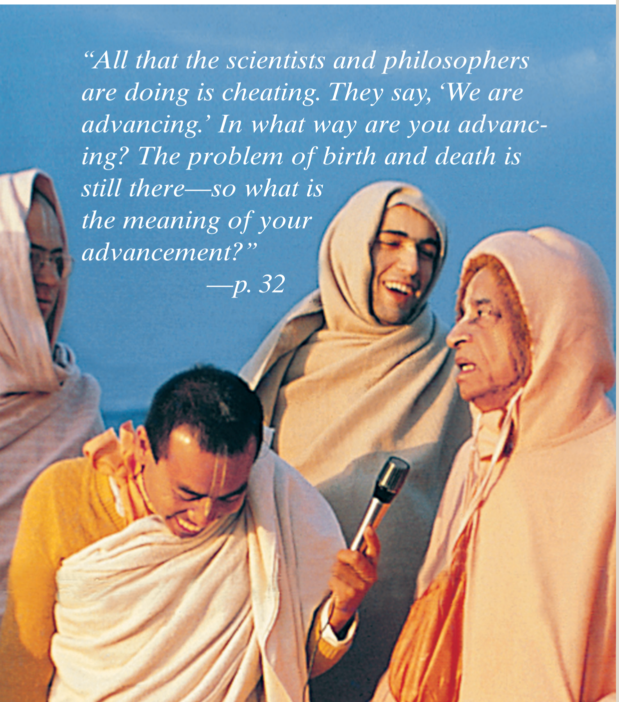
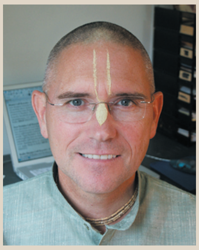
Rising Above the Mind

COVER The new Hare Kṛṣṇa temple complex in Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh, India, sits at the base of the Tirumala Hills, site of the famous Bālājī temple. Please see the article beginning on page 40. (Photo by Igor Hrstich.)



"All that the scientists and philosophers are doing is cheating. They say, 'We are advancing.' In what way are you advancing? The problem of birth and death is still there—so what is the meaning of your advancement?"
—p. 32

WELCOME

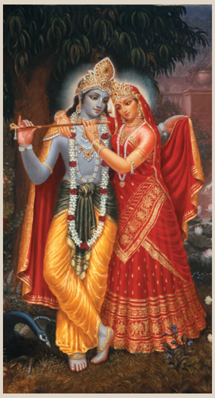


OUR COVER STORY in this issue takes us to Tirupati, South India, home to one of the busiest pilgrimage sites in the world. The history of the Bālājī temple on top of the Tirumala Hills goes back thousands of years. Now the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement has opened a stunning temple at the base of those hills. While the worship of the Kṛṣṇa deity known as Bālājī emphasizes the awe-inspiring nature of God, pilgrims to the Hare Kṛṣṇa temple worship Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, the full expression of God's most intimate feature.

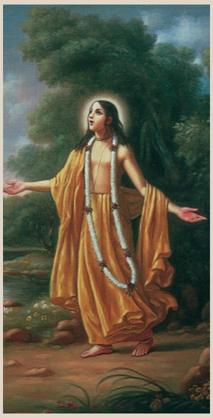
Each summer, another type of pilgrimage takes place in the mountains of British Columbia, Canada, when children come for a summer camp at the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement's Saranagati Village. Viśākhā Devī Dāsī, a Saranagati resident and long-time *Back to Godhead* contributor, reports on how the camp's organizers help the kids keep Kṛṣṇa in the center while learning and having fun in a great natural setting.

From southern India to western Canada, Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees are everywhere. In the 1970s, one young woman ran into them in the U.S.A., in Europe, and in India. Jāmbavatī Devī Dāsī tells how impressions from those early meetings stayed with her for two decades, until she finally decided to follow her heart and join Kṛṣṇa's worldwide family.

Hare Kṛṣṇa.—*Nāgarāja Dāsa, Editor*



Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa are together the one Supreme Absolute Truth.



Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the combined incarnation of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, inaugurated the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa five hundred years ago.

OUR PURPOSES

- To help all people discern reality from illusion, spirit from matter, the eternal from the temporary.
- To expose the faults of materialism.
- To offer guidance in the Vedic techniques of spiritual life.
- To preserve and spread the Vedic culture.
- To celebrate the chanting of the holy names of God as taught by Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
- To help every living being remember and serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead.

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

BACK TO GODHEAD
The Magazine of the
Hare Krishna Movement

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Letters

BTG Relieves Stress

I thank the BTG team and magazine from the bottom of my heart. After reading various articles on Kṛṣṇa consciousness and *bhakti-yoga,* I find extreme relief from various day-to-day stresses. I eagerly look forward to reading every new BTG magazine.

Rahul E.
Via the Internet

A Chanter But a Skeptic

I have always been religiously skeptical and have no strong intellectual commitment to many of the truth-claims of ISKCON's theology, but I am seriously committed to chanting the *mahā-mantra* a minimum of three rounds per day. I also attend the temple once or twice per month and have never felt deeper joy in my life.

Sometimes I feel guilty for entering the temple if I don't feel the intellectual commitment to many fundamental beliefs or stories of the movement (which are firmly and passionately held by the devotees), but I really feel as if my emotional experience must be as good as almost everyone there.

Am I doing anything wrong by attending the temple?

Michael S.
Via the Internet

Our reply: No, it gives Kṛṣṇa pleasure when people visit Him in the temple. He is more pleased if people can accept Him as He describes Himself in the scripture as well, but still He is pleased when people see His deity form. Faith develops gradually, so it is not expected that everyone will have firm faith in the beginning. Advancement made in a previous life allows one to quickly accept the scripture and the version of the previous spiritual teachers with great faith.

You talk as if it is intellectually respectable to doubt the scriptures, but in our tradition the saint Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, a very great intellectual of his time, had complete faith in the scriptures. He is just one of many examples.

The Lord wants us to have faith in Him, in His representatives, and in the scriptures. He indicates this in *Bhagavad-gītā* in many places (e.g., 3.31–32, 4.39–42, and 9.3).

Faithfulness can be developed by associating with people who have genuine faith, not those who are blind followers, but those whose faithful devotional service has blessed them with actual realization. Try to find such fortunate people and serve and hear from them, and your faith will increase. In the interim, do not speak in such a way that others will lose faith, because that kind of speaking would oppose the Lord's desire that people become increasingly faithful. Just state the truth that you do not have complete faith in the scriptural accounts but are attracted to many aspects of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Slowly or quickly your faith will increase by such association.

Attending the temple and chanting the *mahā-mantra* are always beneficial for our spiritual life. So go on with these practices despite your intellectual doubts.

Karma or Free Will

I offer my profound thanks to both everyone on the *Back to Godhead* staff and to Navin Jani for the article entitled "How Free Are We?" [May/June] This article contained the best explanations and analysis of the various opinions on free will I have ever read. Previously, I was never able to get a clear picture of the balance of will and karmic reactions, but now, thanks to your efforts, I am not only able to understand it myself but can use the excellent analogies in the article to explain the Vedic version to others.

I also deeply appreciated the article on praying to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī in the same issue. I have developed a strong affinity to praying to Her and to writing poetry about Her, and this article was both extremely instructive and highly inspirational as to my continuing to perform these types of *bhakti.*

Carl Sheppard
Monticello, Florida

No Life Without Prabhupāda

My first contact with the movement was in 1970 when a Canadian girl who owned a hippie boutique gave me a BTG and a nice big poster of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, the one where They are leaning on each other, with many birds and cows around. I used to look at and actually live in that poster. Then the very first BTG article I read affected me exactly as if I'd had a huge plate of *mahā-prasādam,* and from that day on I never doubted that Kṛṣṇa was God.

A few months later I met some devotees in Boston, and upon seeing them I felt God in them and felt that they knew love. Understanding this was my greatest fortune in life. Today I know how fortunate we are to have nice instructions providing a solid foundation as to what to eat and how to conduct one's life to remember Kṛṣṇa always. All because of Prabhupāda do we have these sublime directions to improve and finally free ourselves from this tabernacle.

I cannot imagine how horrible this world and my life would have been if Prabhupāda had not made it here. If he'd died on the boat—how dark our lives would be with no knowledge of Kṛṣṇa!

Reginald Michaud
Portage, Maine

Brothers and Sisters On the Inside

I am a prison inmate, doing time for a robbery I didn't commit. But that's ok. I have been going to the Hare Kṛṣṇa service here inside the prison. I also have a friend who helps me get this BTG subscription and helps with my growing understanding of Kṛṣṇa and the movement. I would like everyone to know that there are brothers and sisters inside who are giving their lives and hearts to Kṛṣṇa and are part of the ISKCON movement. Please keep us in your thoughts and prayers.

Chio Saechao
Ontario, Oregon

The Only Way?

Why are there so many religions? Is Kṛṣṇa the only way? I remember A. C. Bhaktivedanta saying that all ways lead to Kṛṣṇa, yet so many religions state that their way is the only way.

Nigel Sunderland
United Kingdom

Our reply: There are many religions because there are so many different levels of people to minister to. Kṛṣṇa says that *bhakti* (devotional service) is the only way (*Bhagavad-gītā* 11.54, 18.55). For a particular audience at a particular time, *bhakti* may be presented in a particular way. The names of the scripture, the saints, and the rituals may differ, so the way may appear different, but the idea of following

(*please turn to page 10*)

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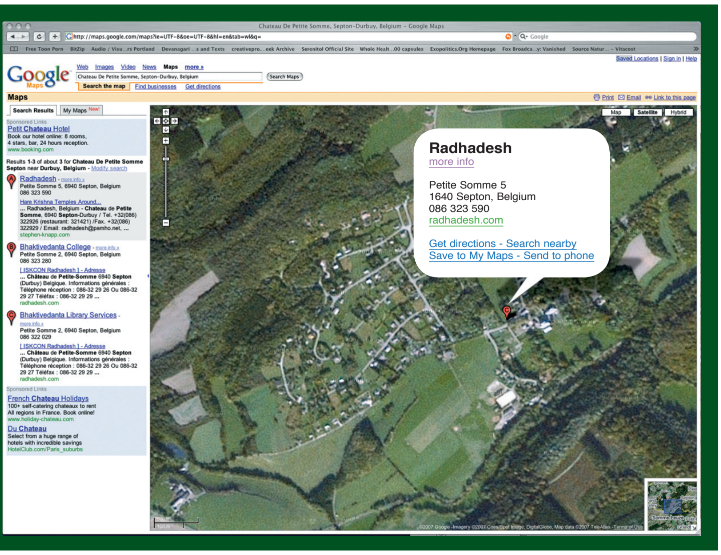

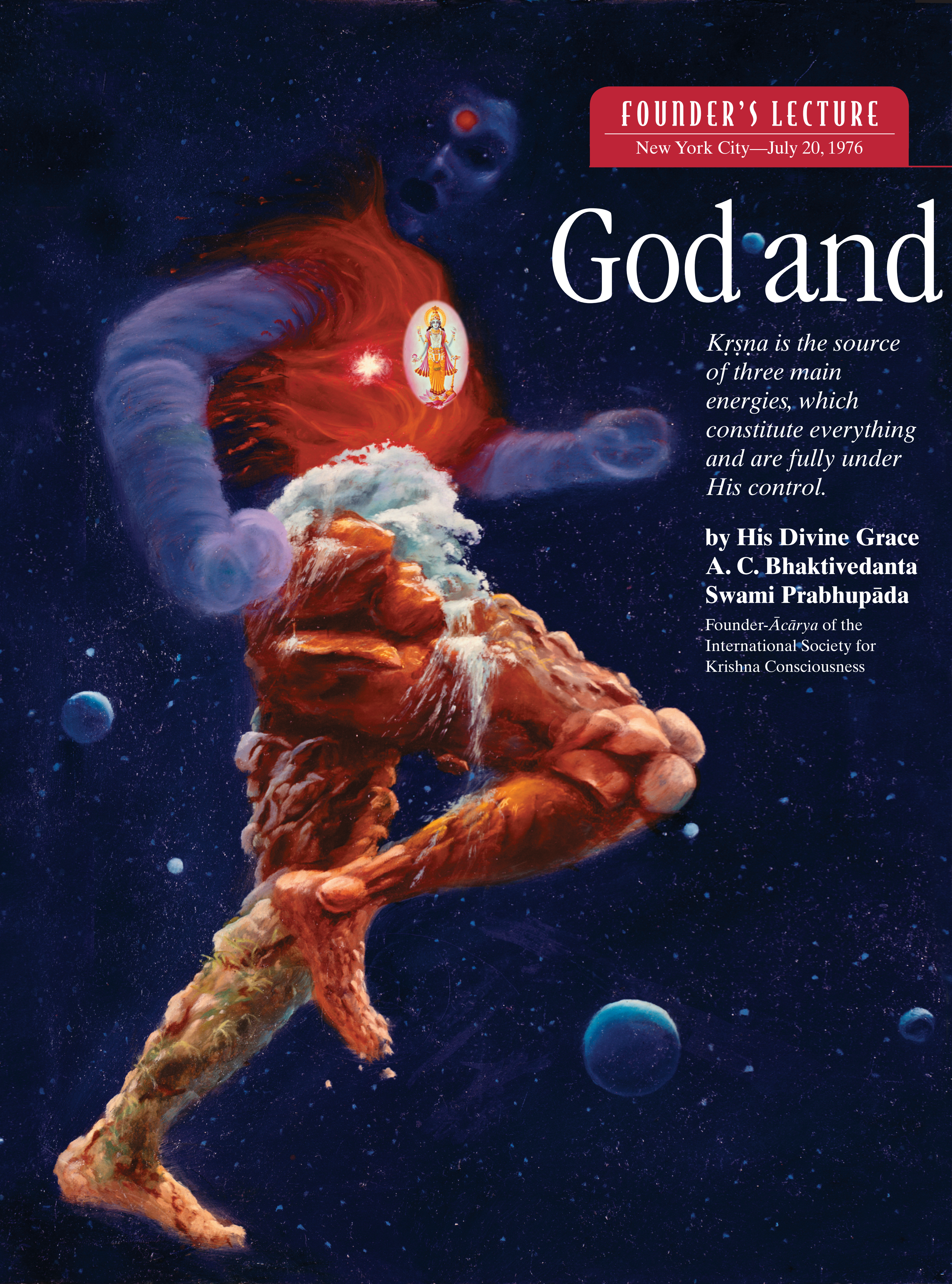

FOUNDER'S LECTURE

New York City—July 20, 1976

God and

Kṛṣṇa is the source of three main energies, which constitute everything and are fully under His control.

by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

Founder-*Ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

Painting by Muralīdhara Dāsa

His Energies

viṣṇu-śaktiḥ parā proktā
kṣetrajñākhyā tathā parā
avidyā-karma-samjñānyā
tṛtīyā śaktir iṣyate

"Originally, Kṛṣṇa's energy is spiritual, and the energy known as the living entity is also spiritual. However, there is another energy, called illusion, which consists of fruitive activity. That is the Lord's third potency."—*Śrī Viṣṇu Purāṇa* 6.7.61

The Supreme Absolute Truth is Bhagavān, Viṣṇu, the all-pervading Personality of Godhead. As He is spiritual, His potency must also be spiritual. The example is the sun and the sunshine. The sun globe is the reservoir of heat and light, so its potency—sunshine—is also heat and light. Sunshine is not different from the sun.

Śakti means potency. *Śakti śaktimat abheda:* "The potency is not different from its source." The potency of a person is not different in quality from the person. The same example: the sun and the sunshine. Sunshine is the potency of the sun, and the quality of the sun is the same as the quality of the sunshine—heat and light.

According to Vedic information, the Personality of Godhead has multifarious potencies. We can see different types of energy working within the creation. Take for example the leaves of a tree. Some of them are green; some of them are red; some of them are yellow; some of them are mixed. Similarly, fruits have different tastes, and flowers have different fragrances. There is variety in creation, but where is it coming from? The sunshine. The sunshine is the same, but it is acting in different ways, so we see different manifestations. This is a crude material example.

The original spiritual entity is Kṛṣṇa. He says in *Bhagavad-gītā* (10.8), *ahaṁ sarvasya prabhavaḥ:* "I am the source of everything." Whatever comes from Kṛṣṇa is not different from Kṛṣṇa. All these colored manifestations come from Kṛṣṇa. *Mattaḥ sarvaṁ pravartate:* "Everything comes from Me."

Everything is Kṛṣṇa's *śakti,* potency. There is no doubt about it. *Vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti*: Vāsudeva is everything. [*Bhagavad-gītā* 7.19] That is Kṛṣṇa. But He's working in so many ways. How? That is stated in the *Vedas: svābhāvikī jñāna-bala-kriyā ca.* He has unlimited potency, so things are being done as if naturally, without any endeavor. But the background is Kṛṣṇa. For example, we see a very small flower growing. The stem is very fine, and the flower is decorated with different colors. But it is not an ordinary thing. If you are a painter and you paint such a flower, it will take so many days. Don't think that the flower has come automatically. No. There is no such thing as automatically. When you paint a flower, you have to employ so much energy. Similarly Kṛṣṇa has to use the same energy. But it is so natural for Kṛṣṇa. *Svābhāvikī jñāna-bala-kriyā ca*—simply by His will it is happening. He doesn't have to endeavor for it.

That is the difference between Kṛṣṇa's activities and our activities, although because we are part of Kṛṣṇa, we have the same qualities that He has. *Kṣetrajña* means the living entities. They have the same potency as Kṛṣṇa. So then what is the difference? The difference is that the *kṣetrajña,* the living entities, are prone to come under illusion. We are very small; therefore we are prone to be extinguished. The spark, when it is out of the fire, is extinguished—no more fiery quality. But as long as it is playing within the fire, you'll find the

This symbolic illustration shows Kṛṣṇa's gross and subtle material energies, the individual soul, and the Supersoul.

nice brilliant sparks coming, dancing. The quality is the same. Fire can burn, and the small spark can burn your cloth. But like the spark, the living entity, when he's out of Kṛṣṇa's touch, is extinguished. He is covered by darkness, his spiritual quality extinguished. Not finished—but at least stopped for some time.

Spiritual quality cannot be finished because it is spiritual. *Na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre* [Bg. 2.20]. The spiritual quality cannot be finished. It goes on. And on account of *avidyā,* ignorance, the living entity goes to another body, then another—transmigration of the soul. And unless he is revived to his original consciousness, he has to go through that repeatedly. He has to struggle for existence. He's trying to get back to his original position, which is like Kṛṣṇa's brilliant position.

The Struggle for Existence

This is called the struggle for existence. As today's verse says, *avidyā-karma-samjñānyā.* People are trying to be happy. You'll find in New York City that people are simply struggling. What is their aim? To become happy. Somebody is drinking, somebody is gambling, somebody is going to the restaurant, somebody is going to Times Square, and somebody is going here, there. Their real aim is to become happy. But because of *avidyā,* ignorance, they are unable to become happy. That is their position. *Avidyā-karma-samjñānyā tṛtīyā śaktir. Avidyā* is illusion. We are now enwrapped, covered with the body, and we are thinking, "I am this body." That is *avidyā.*

I am not the body, so I have to be brought to this knowledge: "You are not the body. Because you wanted to dominate the material nature, you have a material body. Because you wanted to eat stool, you have a hog's body. Because you wanted to unnecessarily create trouble, you have become a monkey. Because you wanted to drink fresh blood, you have the body of a tiger." That is called *avidyā.* We are neither tiger nor pig nor monkey nor human being nor American nor Indian. We are spirit soul. We have to come to that knowledge. From *avidyā,* ignorance, one has to come to knowledge. Then his life will be successful.

Change Through Spiritual Association

Our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is trying to bring back human society, because it is not possible to bring monkeys and cats and dogs to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That is not possible. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is difficult for those who are of the dog's mentality, cat's mentality, monkey's mentality. They have to change their mentality by *sat-saṅga,* spiritual association. You are hearing from the *śāstra,* scripture, and I am speaking from the *śāstra.* That is called *sat-saṅga.*

satāṁ prasaṅgān mama vīrya-
saṁvido
bhavanti hṛt-karṇa-rasāyanāḥ
kathāḥ
taj-joṣaṇād āśv apavarga-vartmani
śraddhā ratir bhaktir anukramiṣyati

"In the association of pure devotees, discussion of the pastimes and activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is very pleasing and

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—Hari-kīrtana Dāsa, New York City

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satisfying to the ear and the heart. By cultivating such knowledge one gradually becomes advanced on the path of liberation, and thereafter he is freed, and his attraction becomes fixed. Then real devotion and devotional service begin." [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.25.25] By *sat-saṅga,* by real spiritual association—by talking with saintly persons, by mixing with them—then we can learn about the unlimited potencies of Kṛṣṇa. In spiritual association, topics of Kṛṣṇa become very pleasing to the heart and to the ear. Otherwise, without *sat-saṅga,* that is not possible. If you go to a professional reciter of the *Bhāgavatam,* his words will enter into this ear and go out this ear, that's all. Because there is no life to his speech; it is business.

You cannot do business with Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is not agreeable to that proposal. He's the master. You cannot use Him for your service. You must engage yourself in His service. That is wanted. "Kṛṣṇa is my master; I must serve Kṛṣṇa. I shall not make Kṛṣṇa an instrument to become my servant."

The Power of One Moon

The *Bhagavad-gītā* says that four kinds of people with pious backgrounds come to Kṛṣṇa but the impious cannot. Why have only a few selected persons come here? Because it requires a background of pious activities. Otherwise it is not possible. We do not expect that all people will become Kṛṣṇa conscious. That is not possible. But if there is one ideal Kṛṣṇa conscious person, he can benefit many thousands. *Ekaś candras tamo hanti na ca taraḥ sahasraṣaḥ:* If there is one moon in the sky, it—and not millions of twinkling stars—can illuminate the whole universe.

People are suffering. *Avidyā-karma-samjñānyā.* Being enwrapped by *avidyā,* illusion, they are struggling for existence. So Kṛṣṇa comes Himself to deliver them. *Paritrāṇāya sādhūnāṁ vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām* [Bg. 4.8]. That is His business. So Kṛṣṇa's devotee takes up the business of Kṛṣṇa through this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. That will do good to him and to the persons to whom he preaches.

We must preach what is in the *śāstra.* That is Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's instruction:

yāre dekha, tāre kaha 'kṛṣṇa'-
upadeśa
āmāra ājñāya guru hañā tāra'
ei deśa

"Instruct everyone to follow the orders of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa as they are given in the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.* In this way become a spiritual master and try to liberate everyone in this land." [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā* 7.128]

Do not become a rascal guru yourself by manufacturing something imaginary: "Do this. Give me some money and become God." Don't do that. Teach what Kṛṣṇa has said, that's all. What is the difficulty? What Kṛṣṇa has said, you say. *Man-manā bhava mad-bhakto mad-yājī māṁ namaskuru:* "Always think of Me, become My devotee, worship Me, and offer your homage unto Me." [Bg. 18.65]. Teach these four things.

"Become a devotee of Kṛṣṇa."

"How can I become a devotee?"

"Come to the temple, offer obeisances, take *prasādam."*

What is the difficulty in becoming a preacher? And even if no one comes, there is no difficulty. People are such rascals that they will not come. We are giving so much facility: "Come here, live in this nice building, and hear about Kṛṣṇa. Take *prasādam,* chant and dance, live a very happy life." But people would rather become hogs. They are preparing their life for that purpose. They'll become a dog in the next life. They prefer that.

The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement performs the topmost welfare activities for the world. People should try to understand this movement and join it and take advantage of it.

Thank you very much.

What Is the Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement?

Founded in 1966 by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) carries on a great ancient tradition rooted in the *Bhagavad-gītā,* the teachings Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke five millennia ago. The *Gītā* and the other Vedic scriptures declare Kṛṣṇa to be the original person, God Himself, who appears periodically in this world to liberate all living beings.

Only five hundred years ago, Kṛṣṇa descended as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to teach the most sublime and effective means of meditation for the present day: the chanting of the names of God, especially as found in the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.

Today members of ISKCON continue Lord Caitanya's movement by distributing the teachings of Lord Kṛṣṇa and the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra all over the world.

Pronunciation

We spell Sanskrit words and names by a phonetic system that lets you know how to say each word. Pronounce short **a** like the **u** in b**u**t, long **ā** like the **a** in f**a**r (and held twice as long as the short **a**). Pronounce **e** like the **a** in ev**a**de, long **ī** like the **i** in p**i**que. Pronounce the vowel **ṛ** like the **ri** in **ri**m, and **c** like the **ch** in **ch**air. Pronounce consonants like **ch, jh,** and **dh** as in staun**ch-h**eart, hed**ge-h**og, and re**d-h**ot. Pronounce **ś** and **ṣ** like **sh.** So for *Kṛṣṇa* say KRISHNA, for *Caitanya* say CHAITANYA.

Spiritual Names

ISKCON members receive names of Lord Kṛṣṇa or his great devotees, combined with Dāsa, for men, or Dāsī, for women, both of which mean "servant." For instance, the name Kṛṣṇa Dāsa means "servant of Kṛṣṇa."

LETTERS (*continued from page 5*)
scriptures and saints to awaken devotion to God is the way in general.

Also, the idea of connecting to God through one who is already connected to Him is similarly important.

Generally religions also advise abstaining from certain materialistic activities and embracing certain spiritually uplifting ones.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.2.6) describes religion this way: "The supreme occupation [dharma] for all humanity is that by which men can attain to loving devotional service unto the transcendent Lord. Such devotional service must be unmotivated and uninterrupted to completely satisfy the self."

All religions, at their best, are different ways to bring one closer to a state of unmotivated and uninterrupted devotional service unto the transcendent Lord, and in that sense they are one in purpose, though apparently differing in detail. ❁

Replies were written by Kṛṣṇa-kṛpā Dāsa.

Please write to us at: BTG, P. O. Box 430, Alachua, FL 32616, USA. E-mail: editors@krishna.com.

Hare
Kṛṣṇa
Hare
Kṛṣṇa
Kṛṣṇa
Kṛṣṇa
Hare
Hare
Hare
Rāma
Hare
Rāma
Rāma
Rāma
Hare
Hare

Yamarāja Dāsa

PRONUNCIATION: ha-ray, krish-na, ra-ma (rhymes with "drama")

Glossary

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Ācārya—a spiritual master who teaches by example.

Balarāma—Lord Kṛṣṇa's first expansion, who acts in the role of Lord Kṛṣṇa's elder brother.

Battle of Kurukshetra—an epic battle for rule of the world, fought five thousand years ago.

Bhagavad-gītā—the sacred book in which Lord Kṛṣṇa gives the essence of knowledge to His friend and disciple Arjuna.

Bhakti—devotional service to the Supreme Lord.

Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura—the spiritual master of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

Bhakti-yoga—linking with the Supreme Lord through devotional service.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu—the incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa who appeared five hundred years ago to teach the chanting of the names of God as the religion for the present age.

Dharma—(1) ordained duties or religious principles; (2) one's eternal, natural occupation (i.e., devotional service to the Lord).

Godhead—the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Reality, progressively realized first as the impersonal all-pervasive oneness, more fully as the Supersoul within the heart of every living being, and ultimately as the all-opulent Supreme Person.

Gurukula—a school where children learn the philosophy and practices of Kṛṣṇa consciousness along with regular academic subjects (literally "the place of the guru").

Hare Kṛṣṇa—the great mantra Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

ISKCON—the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Japa—individual chanting of names of God, usually while counting on beads.

Kali-yuga—in the endlessly repeated cycle of four cosmic ages, the present and worst age, the Age of Quarrel, of which 5,000 of 432,000 years have passed.

Karma—material action; its inevitable reaction; or the law by which such action and reaction are governed.

Kīrtana—congregational singing of names of God, usually accompanied by cymbals (*karatālas*) and drums (*mṛdaṅgas*).

Kṛṣṇa—the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His original transcendental form (see "Godhead").

Mahābhārata—the epic history of ancient India, a history in which the *Bhagavad-gītā* appears as the most important and well-known text.

Māyā—illusion; the energy of the Supreme Lord that deludes living entities into forgetting their spiritual nature and forgetting God.

Māyāvādī—one who regards the A[illegible] ultimately impersonal.

Modes of nature—the three qualities (goo[illegible] and ignorance) that hold sway over all act[illegible]e material world.

Nityānanda—the incarnation of Lord Balarāma who appeared with Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Prasādam—vegetarian food that has been prepared for the Lord and offered to Him with devotion (literally "mercy").

Purāṇas—Vedic histories.

Rādhārāṇī—Lord Kṛṣṇa's consort and pleasure potency.

Rathayātrā—"chariot festival": a festival in which the form of Kṛṣṇa is borne in procession on a large canopy-topped chariot or float, especially the festival originating in Puri, India, for Jagannātha (Lord Kṛṣṇa, "the Lord of the universe").

Sannyāsa—the renounced life of a man who relinquishes home to dedicate himself fully to the Supreme.

Śrī—an honorific meaning "opulent" (similarly: Śrīla, Śrīmad, Śrīmān, Śrīmatī).

Śrīla Prabhupāda—His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam—the most important of the eighteen *Purāṇas,* which tells of the nature and pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa and His devotees.

Supersoul—the form of the Lord who resides in every heart along with the individual soul.

Upaniṣads—the 108 essential philosophical treatises that appear within the *Vedas.*

Vaiṣṇava—a devotee of the Supreme Lord (from the word *Viṣṇu*).

Varṇāśrama—the Vedic social system. It organizes society into four occupational and four spiritual divisions (*varṇas* and *āśramas*). The members of the four *varṇas* are the *brāhmaṇas* (intellectuals and priests), the *kṣatriyas* (administrators and soldiers), the *vaiśyas* (farmers and businessmen), and the *śūdras* (laborers and artisans). The members of the four *āśramas* are the *brahmacārīs* (celibate students), *gṛhasthas* (married people), *vānaprasthas* (retired people), and *sannyāsīs* (renunciants).

Vedas—the hymns of knowledge revealed by the Lord Himself at the beginning of creation.

Vedic—pertaining to the culture in which the *Vedas* and related scriptures guide all aspects of human life.

Viṣṇu—any form of the Personality of Godhead (see "Godhead"); the forms the Lord manifests to create and sustain the material world.

Vṛndāvana—the transcendental abode of Lord Kṛṣṇa, mirrored on earth as the town in India where Kṛṣṇa appeared five thousand years ago.

A Spiritual Summer Retreat in

SARANAGATI VILLAGE

In remote British Columbia, children learn swimming, hiking, theater, archery, and candlemaking—all in a Kṛṣṇa conscious setting.

Text and photos by Viśākhā Devī Dāsī

On Lake Saranagati (above) a towel becomes a sail for a homemade raft. The author's daughter Amrita (above right), one of the camp counselors, reads the Bhagavad-gītā *with a camper. The campers worshiped deities of Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma (right), served by Kartamasa and Radha Kunda Delaney, the camp's founders.*

SOME FORTY-FIVE years ago, in the blue-green waters of the lake at Camp Kawakee, after much trepidation and practice I coordinated my limbs, head, and body into the fluid motion of the crawl. Finally I could swim. The four summers I spent in that small upstate New York camp gave me a love for the outdoors, for exploration, and for life without cars and television. There I became aware of the importance of camaraderie and of solitude. I learned how to resuscitate someone, how to properly treat wounds, and how to survive with minimal provisions. But it never occurred to me to question the goal of life or how to achieve that goal. And looking back, I think that no other Kawakee camper or instructor considered such questions either. For me, those questions were answered many years later—from my contact with the teachings of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

Śrīla Prabhupāda repeatedly explains that this body is temporary, the soul eternal. In the human form of life we can, if we choose, give up material engagements and perform devotional service to the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa without desiring worldly compensation. By serving the Lord with devotion, Śrīla Prabhupāda says, we will gradually become eligible to return home, back to Godhead. He also says that we should not become fathers or mothers unless we can save our children from repeatedly being born and dying—that is, from the cycle of transmigration—by engaging them in the devotional service of the Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

These instructions are clear and are confirmed by the scriptures. And, for those of us who are parents, the last one is an especially great challenge. The futility of material activities and the need for spiritual life may be apparent to us, but our children want fun and excitement—a Camp Kawakee-like experience—especially during their summer break.

Internationally renowned cookbook author Yamuna Devi (right) shares a hug with campers after their morning of spiritual activities at her Rādhā-Banabihārī Ashram. Below, the campers practice a dance they will perform to celebrate the appearance day of Lord Balarāma.

In a letter to a disciple, Śrīla Prabhupāda offered a practical solution to this difficulty: “The children should always be instructed

by taking advantage of their playful mood. Teach them to play Kṛṣṇa games. They can be cowherd boys, cows, peacocks, demons, etc. If they think of Kṛṣṇa by playing just as if they are actually present in association with Kṛṣṇa, then they will become Kṛṣṇa conscious very quickly." He further explained, "Let them learn something, chant, dance, eat much *prasādam* if they like, and do not mind if they have a playful nature. Let them also play and run. That is natural." These instructions form the basis of the children's summer camp in Saranagati Village, British Columbia, Canada.

Far removed from the hubbub and tension of urban and suburban life, Saranagati, a four-and-a-half hour drive from Vancouver, is a 1,600-acre lake-studded, "off the grid" valley in the Coastal Mountains, its residents dedicated to the principle of living simply and progressing spiritually through following the instructions of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

The children's summer camp, begun by Radha Kunda and Kartamasa Delaney, starts each day with the campers' chanting *japa,* having *kīrtana,* and then praying to the small Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma deities worshiped by this young married couple, both of whose parents are disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda. With Śrīla Prabhupāda's directives to guide

Campers get plenty of exercise (left). At right, with the help of Nitai Prana (back to camera), campers make rafts using logs from Saranagati's forests and lumber cut in Saranagati's sawmill.

After eating their fill of fresh raspberries (above), Hari Priya (left) and Annapurna have decorated themselves with raspberry tilaka *and* gopī *dots. Below, campers draw and color pictures of Kṛṣṇa.*

The campers go to local activities by bicycle (left), an economical, healthy, and fun mode of transportation. Below, Sridhama (playing karatālas*), Hari Nam (playing drum), and Amrita have an early morning* kīrtana *before the deity of Śrīla Prabhupāda in Saranagati's Gaura-Nitāi temple.*

them ("some exercise is required for development," Prabhupāda said), they organize the children's day around physical outdoor activities and hands-on educational experiences. The campers make candles, learn archery, and help each other through an obstacle course. They swim and hike, create dioramas of Kṛṣṇa's activities, and for the pleasure of Saranagati's residents, perform a play about the pastimes of the Lord.

When Radha and Kartamasa's work as schoolteachers stopped them from continuing the camp in 2006, Amrita Devi became the head counselor, assisted by the campers' parents and many Saranagati residents. Like Radha and Kartamasa, Amrita wanted the children to have fun, learn new skills, and become more conscious of Kṛṣṇa.

Sitting in a hand-built log cabin, Amrita says, "The first instruction Prahlāda Mahārāja gave his classmates is that like adults, children can also practice the activities of devotional service. Out of all the

Some of the girls get lessons in traditional Indian dance (above). At right, Amrita decorates eleven-year-old Kulavati's hand with mendhi.

many different species of life it is rare to achieve a human birth, and although the human form is temporary—as all material bodies are—it is meaningful because in it one can serve Kṛṣṇa with devotion. Even a little sincere devotional service can give a child complete perfection.

Amrita pauses for a moment to help a camper with a woodworking project.

"We want the campers to know that devotional service is natural," she continues. "We want them to know that Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is their most dear friend and well-wisher. Instead of being bewildered in their childhood and wasting time or getting involved with bad company, these children can serve the Lord. Their relationship with the Supreme Person is a fact, and they can act and speak in a way that will satisfy and please Him. Lord Kṛṣṇa is beyond the conception of material knowledge, but He can be understood even by a child who serves Him with love."

A day after the 2006 camp ended, one of the campers, Rasamandala, age eleven, said, "I loved the whole experience, from beginning to end. I can't even say what my favorite activity was, because they were all so good."

Her father, Yogīnātha Dāsa, said, "This camp is a chance for the children to learn to get along with each other, to practice devotional activities, to learn new ways of serving Kṛṣṇa, and to have fun in the process. It's really not a camp at all but a spiritual summer retreat." ✿

Viśākhā Devī Dāsī has been contributing articles and photographs to BTG for more than thirty years. She and her husband, Yaduvara Dāsa, have lived at Saranagati Village since 1999.

For more information, or to register for the 2007 summer session (August 15–27), contact Yogīnātha Dāsa or Udārakīrtī Devī Dāsī at (250) 457-7186.

In Bhagavad-gītā *class (top) campers chant prayers of invocation. At left (top), Sāmba has kidnapped Lakṣmaṇā; Duryodhana and Bhīṣma are displeased. At bottom left, Kṛṣṇa attracts the* gopīs *with His flute on a moonlit night. Above, empty stomachs and the closing moments of an active day are filled with hot milk, banana bread, and pastimes from the* Mahābhārata.

A LESSON IN HU

Getting lost in material ambitions is easy, but the association of Kṛṣṇa's devotees can help set our thinking straight.

by Rashi Singh

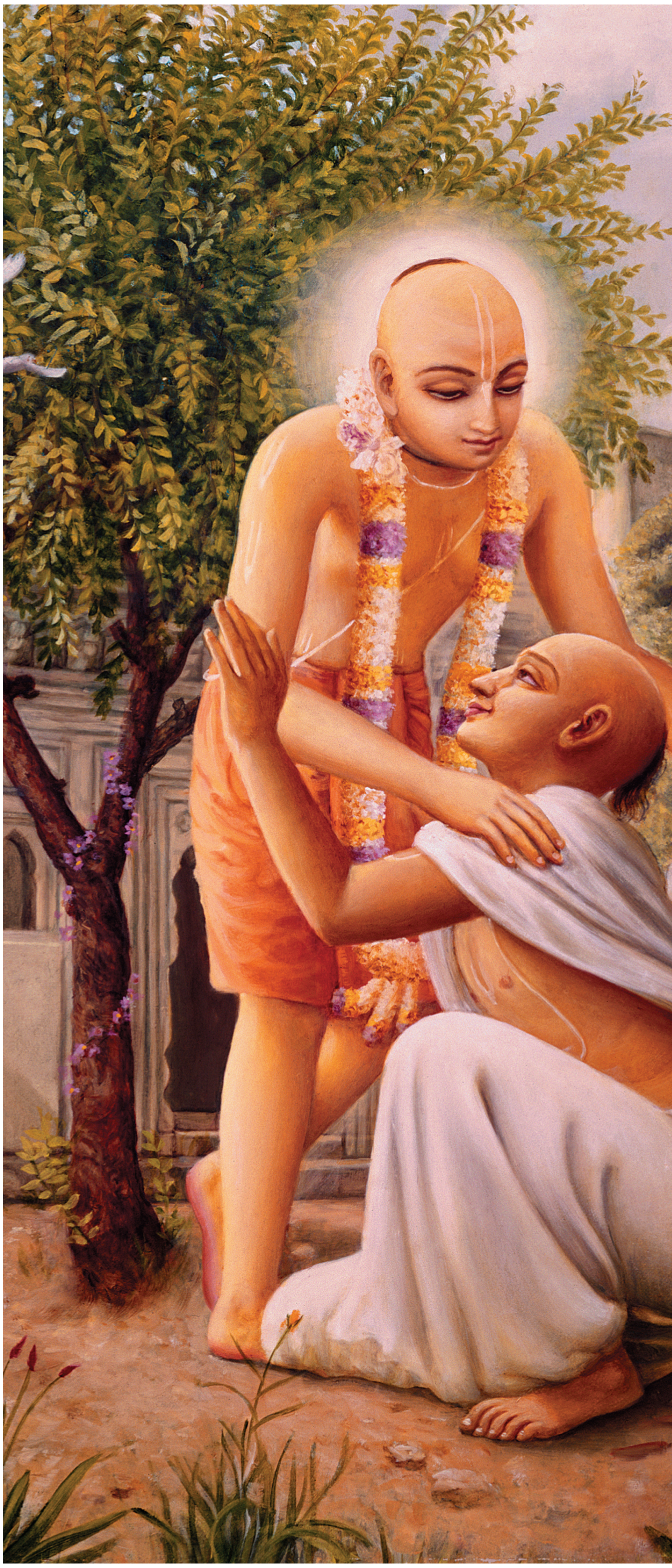
THE OTHER DAY I came across a job posting from a company seeking a brand manager to head up its international marketing department. It is a relatively young company, with no branding or positioning—a marketer's dream. I became excited at the thought of winning the position, working for a reputable company, having the opportunity to travel, getting the experience on my resume, exceeding the company's expectations . . . Had I not stopped myself I'm sure that by the end of my thought process I would have won several coveted international awards and been featured in the world's top business trade magazines.

I laughed out loud at the absurdity of my thought process. But it was a nervous laugh, too. "Kṛṣṇa," I thought, "how did I just completely lose myself in thoughts of personal fame and prestige?"

I sat down in front of my Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma deities and prayed for perspective and spiritual strength. I prayed for the desire to serve the Lord and His devotees, and acknowledged the huge contaminated portion of my heart that still craves material gains.

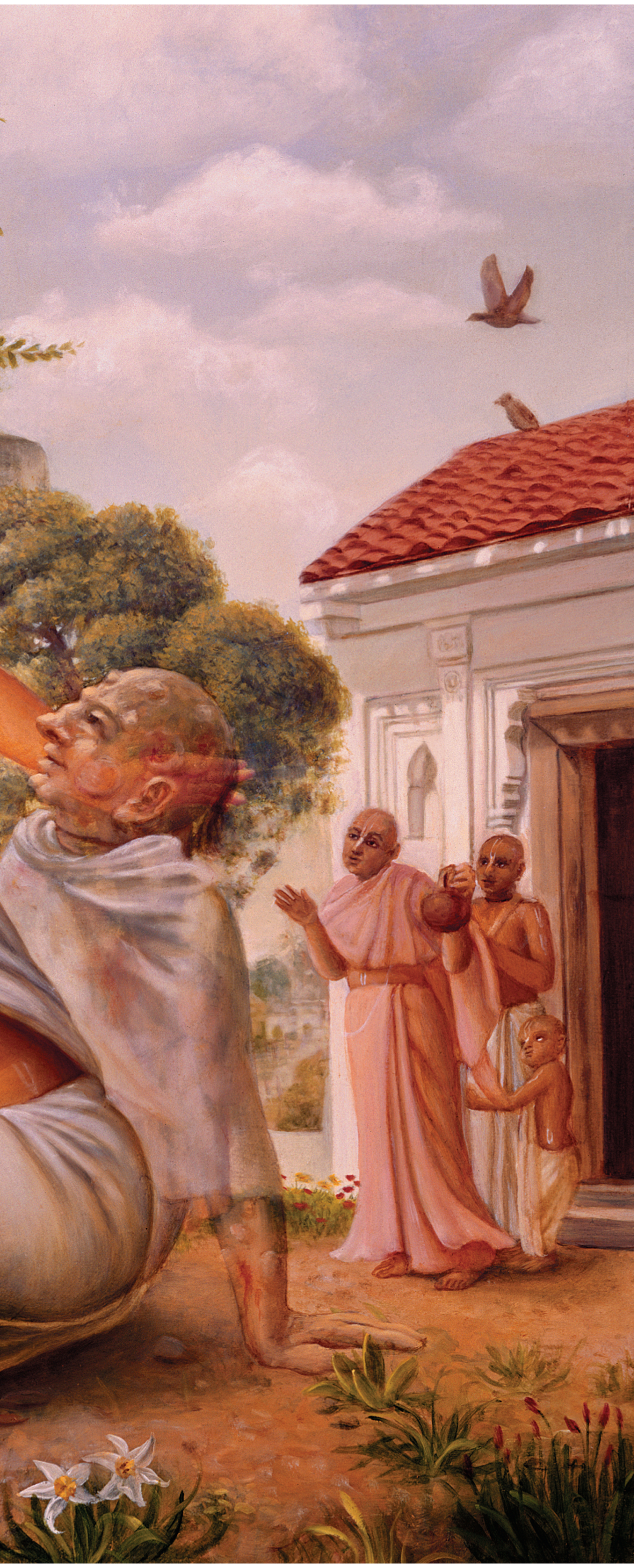
I remembered an inspiring lecture I had recently read, given by His Holiness Rādhānātha Swami. He spoke about a great devotee of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu named Vāsudeva, a meek, humble devotee of Kṛṣṇa who suffered from severe leprosy. His entire body oozed puss and blood, and he emitted such a foul smell that no one could bear to be in his presence. His friends and relatives had all rejected him. Worms lived all over his body, but he was such a wonderful devotee that when one of the worms fell he would gently pick it up and place it back on his body, thinking that Kṛṣṇa had given the worm his body to enjoy. He was never disturbed; he remained calm and peaceful at all times, simply meditating on the Lord.

Rādhānātha Swami continued to describe that one day Vāsudeva learned that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was staying at a *brāhmaṇa's* house in Kurma Kshetra. Vāsudeva became so ecstatic and determined to see his



When Lord Caitanya cured his leprosy, Vāsudeva worried that pride in his now beautiful body might impede his service to the Lord.

MILITY & GREED



Lord that with great difficulty he traveled a long distance to see Him. When he arrived, however, he discovered that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu had already left.

Vāsudeva was devastated. He considered himself so worthless he fell unconscious.

Being all-knowing, the Lord returned to His devotee and at once embraced him. He was elated to be in the company of His devotee and did not care that Vāsudeva's body was covered with such impurities. Upon receiving the Lord's embrace, Vāsudeva's body became effulgent, and all traces of leprosy vanished. He gained a beautiful, strong, healthy body. Upon discovering this, Vāsudeva became extremely distraught.

"Before, it was very natural for me to be humble and always remember You," Vāsudeva cried. "Now, I'll become proud because I have a youthful body, and because You performed this miracle on me. You are not pleased by any service tinged with pride. What will I do now?"

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu smiled and replied, "Always chant the holy names Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. Always seek shelter of the association of devotees, and enlighten whomever you meet with Kṛṣṇa's words. In this way you will never fall victim to *māyā.*"

Toward the end of the lecture, Rādhānātha Swami asked, "How much are we in anxiety for more service?"

Desiring to Be The Servant of the Lord's Servant

This lecture had a profound effect on me. There I was, meditating on prestige and fortune instead of realizing my proper position: to be a servant of the servant of the servant of the Lord. Vāsudeva was in great pain, in great physical distress, yet he remained equipoised. In fact, he was happy to be the servant of the Lord. After having been awarded a beautiful body, however, he became miserable. He was greatly disturbed at the thought of developing pride and being unable to please Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Immediately, I recognized how insignificant I am, and how my greed was sorely misdirected. Vāsudeva desired service; he had no inclination toward material profits. Of course, I cannot imitate such an exalted devotee, but I can certainly learn from his example. At times, my material obligations and my service on temple committees became a difficult balancing act. During those times, the thought of more service tired me, rather than excited me. This was my own misfortune and contamination; I should be *greedy* for more service, and *greedy* for more devotee association. It is Kṛṣṇa's *mercy* to be engaged in His service. To deny His mercy is simply foolish. To deny His mercy is to not give importance to the home that Śrīla Prabhupāda built for us after enduring so many difficulties just to introduce us to the Absolute

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Truth. How dare I take him and his movement for granted? What am I doing to help serve his mission? How can I remain determined?

Inspired by Śrīla Prabhupāda

All we have to do is think about Śrīla Prabhupāda and we'll have enough motivation for thousands of lifetimes. While we should always remember Śrīla Prabhupāda for his greatness and huge accomplishments, there is also so much nectar and transcendental pleasure to be derived from reading about and discussing his earlier pastimes, both from when he was a young boy and from the early days of ISKCON. Śrīla Prabhupāda left on a boat for America with no one to wave goodbye to him. He used to cook for himself and the first North American devotees, and clean up afterwards as well. He used to walk on the cold Manhattan streets in a dhoti and ride the bus and subway to commute. He left the comfort of everything familiar, only to try to save the world from *māyā's* grip. He was completely alone. He lived alongside the drunkards of the Bowery, and one time was even chased out of his apartment by a roommate high on drugs.

But always, he was humble, forgiving, tolerant, and beautifully kind and merciful. He carefully and methodically nurtured the seeds he had placed in the hearts of the new Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees, and after only twelve years, his movement had grown exponentially. But throughout it all, he remained the same—completely fixed in his determination to serve his spiritual master and Kṛṣṇa, never desiring anything for himself.

Finally, a glimmer of perspective. If nothing else, out of sheer gratitude to Śrīla Prabhupāda I should dedicate my life to serving his mission, even while I have material obligations and aspirations. Both Vāsudeva and Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted no personal recognition or fame, even though they both deserved it. Rather than my being anxious about the duality of this material world, I need to learn how to become anxious for more service. The best part is, the anxiety for more service is somehow only pleasurable and not stressful.

The Importance of Chanting And Good Association

I meditate again on Mahāprabhu's words that Rādhānātha Swami cited in his class: "Chant the *mahā-mantra* and associate with Kṛṣṇa's devotees." The association of devotees is so wonderfully powerful. Simply being in their presence is enough to keep one motivated to serve. Gradually, you inspire one another. Speaking about Kṛṣṇa becomes automatic, and you do it with whomever you meet. Nondevotee association is a necessary element of our lives as well, but the deepest loving exchanges are shared between devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa. It's easy to develop an inflated false ego in the association of nondevotees, because with them, the devotee is the "religious" one, the "spiritual" one. Enter devotee association and the false ego is rightfully smashed into tiny pieces—one recognizes how insignificant he or she truly is, and this realization is actually very blissful. Close nondevotee association is so dangerous that it manifests itself in the subtlest ways in our behavior and thought processes.

As for balancing my material obligations and temple services, that's still a work in progress. But by Vāsudeva's example and Śrīla Prabhupāda's instructions, I know I must chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* and associate with devotees as much as possible. These will guarantee that my greed is redirected toward more service, rather than toward personal prestige.

Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not about focusing on the negative: "Don't work so hard in your material job, don't do this, don't do that . . ." Rather, it is a process that focuses primarily on the positive. If I am currently unsure of how to handle my material obligations, or how much I should or shouldn't associate with my nondevotee friends, I know I can focus on what I *should* be doing: chanting my rounds, reading Śrīla Prabhupāda's books, associating as much as possible with devotees, serving the devotees and ISKCON, and offering whatever little Kṛṣṇa consciousness I have to others. The rest will fall into place. Then I can be assured that whether or not I land that perfect job or have that ideal bank balance, I will recognize that I am merely a puppet in Kṛṣṇa's plan and that Śrīla Prabhupāda may use me as an instrument in his mission. I should serve in whatever small capacity I can. Somehow, I know that mopping the floor in one of Śrīla Prabhupāda's temples will give me more satisfaction than winning any business awards.

Rashi Singh lives and works in Toronto, Canada.

BOOK SECTION: ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM

Referred to as "the ripe fruit of the tree of Vedic literature," *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the most complete and authoritative exposition of Vedic knowledge. Five thousand years ago the great sage Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa composed this *purāṇa,* or history, to explain the essence of spiritual knowledge. Here we present *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in serialized form, with the original Sanskrit text, transliteration, word meanings, translation, and purports by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

THE SELF-BORN LORD

Lord Viṣṇu is being praised by the most learned authorities in the universe, beginning here with great sages who point out His transcendental position above the modes of material nature.

CANTO 4: CHAPTER 7

39 जगदुद्भवस्थितिलयेषु दैवतो
बहुभिद्यमानगुणयात्ममायया
रचितात्मभेदमतये स्वसंस्थया
विनिवर्तितभ्रमगुणात्मने नमः

jagad-udbhava-sthiti-layeṣu daivato
bahu-bhidyamāna-guṇayātma-māyayā
racitātma-bheda-mataye sva-saṁsthayā
vinivartita-bhrama-guṇātmane namaḥ

jagat—the material world; *udbhava*—creation; *sthiti*—maintenance; *layeṣu*—in annihilation; *daivataḥ*—destiny; *bahu*—many; *bhidyamāna*—being variegated; *guṇayā*—by material qualities; *ātma-māyayā*—by His material energy; *racita*—produced; *ātma*—in the living entities; *bheda-mataye*—who produced different inclinations; *sva-saṁsthayā*—by His internal potency; *vinivartita*—caused to stop; *bhrama*—interaction; *guṇa*—of material modes; *ātmane*—unto Him in His personal form; *namaḥ*—obeisances.

We offer our respectful obeisances unto the Supreme, who has created varieties of manifestations and put them under the spell of the three qualities of the material world in order to create, maintain, and annihilate them. He Himself is not under the control of the external energy; in His personal feature He is completely devoid of the variegated manifestation of material qualities, and He is under no illusion of false identification.

PURPORT: Two situations are described in this verse. One is the creation, maintenance, and annihilation of the material world, and the other is the Lord's own establishment. There is also quality in the Lord's own establishment, the kingdom of God. It is stated here that Goloka is His personal situation. There is also quality in Goloka, but that quality is not divided into creation, maintenance, and annihilation. In the external energy, the interaction of the three qualities makes it possible for things to be created, maintained, and annihilated. ① But in the spiritual world, or the kingdom of God, there is no such exhibition, since everything is eternal, sentient, and blissful.

There is a class of philosophers who misunderstand the appearance of the Personality of Godhead within this material world. They are under the impression that when the Supreme Personality of Godhead appears, He is under the spell of the three qualities, like all the other living entities who appear within this material world. ② That is their misunderstanding; as it is clearly stated here (*sva-saṁsthayā*), by His internal potency He is transcendental to all these material qualities.

(1) Why is there no creation, maintenance, and annihilation in the spiritual world?
(2) By which potency is the Lord transcendental to the material qualities?

Similarly, in *Bhagavad-gītā* the Lord says, "I appear by My internal potency." Both the internal and external potencies are under the control of the Supreme, so He does not come under the control of either of these potencies. Rather, everything is under His control. In order to manifest His transcendental name, form, quality, pastimes, and paraphernalia, He brings into action His internal energy.

③ On account of the variegatedness of the external potency, there are manifestations of many qualitative demigods, beginning with Brahmā and Lord Śiva, and people are attracted to these demigods according to their own material quality. But when one is transcendental or surpasses the material qualities, he is simply fixed in the worship of the Supreme Personality. This fact is explained in *Bhagavad-gītā:* anyone engaged in the service of the Lord is already transcendental to the variegatedness and interaction of the three material qualities.

The summary is that the conditioned souls are being pulled by the action and reaction of the material qualities, which create a differentiation of energies. But in the spiritual world the worshipable one is the Supreme Lord and no one else.

ब्रह्मोवाच
40 नमस्ते श्रितसत्त्वाय धर्मादीनां च सूतये
निर्गुणाय च यत्काष्ठां नाहं वेदापरेऽपि च

brahmovāca
namas te śrita-sattvāya
dharmādīnāṁ ca sūtaye
nirguṇāya ca yat-kāṣṭhāṁ
nāhaṁ vedāpare 'pi ca

brahma—the personified *Vedas; uvāca*—said; *namaḥ*—respectful obeisances; *te*—unto You; *śrita-sattvāya*—the shelter of the quality of goodness; *dharma-ādīnām*—of all religion, austerity, and penance; *ca*—and; *sūtaye*—the source; *nirguṇāya*—transcendental to material qualities; *ca*—and; *yat*—of whom (of the Supreme Lord); *kāṣṭhām*—the situation; *na*—not; *aham*—I; *veda*—know; *apare*—others; *api*—certainly; *ca*—and.

The personified Vedas said: We offer our respectful obeisances unto You, the Lord, the shelter of the quality of goodness and therefore the source of all religion, austerity, and penance, for You are transcendental to all material qualities and no one knows You or Your actual situation.

(3) Which of the Lord's potencies accounts for the demigods?
(4) What is the meaning of the Lord's being *nirguṇa*?
(5) How can one understand the transcendental position of the Supreme Lord?

PURPORT: In the material world there is the trinity of the three material qualities. Lord Viṣṇu has accepted the superintendence of the quality of goodness, which is the source of religion, knowledge, austerity, renunciation, opulence, etc. Because of this, actual peace, prosperity, knowledge, and religion can be attained when the living entities are under the control of the quality of goodness in the material world. As soon as they are subjected to the control of the other two qualities, namely passion and ignorance, their precarious conditional life becomes intolerable. ④ But Lord Viṣṇu, in His original position, is always *nirguṇa,* which means transcendental to these material qualities. *Guṇa* means "quality," and *nir* means "negation." This does not indicate, however, that He has no qualities; He has transcendental qualities by which He appears and manifests His pastimes.

The positive transcendental qualitative manifestation is unknown to the students of the *Vedas* as well as to the great stalwart demigods like Brahmā and Śiva. Actually, the transcendental qualities are manifested only to the devotees. ⑤ As confirmed in *Bhagavad-gītā,* simply by discharging devotional service one can understand the transcendental position of the Supreme Lord. Those who are in the mode of goodness can partially enter into the transcendental understanding, but it is advised in *Bhagavad-gītā* that one has to surpass this. The Vedic principles are based on the three qualities of the material modes. One has to transcend the three qualities, and then one can be situated in pure and simple spiritual life.

अग्निरुवाच
41 यत्तेजसाहं सुसमिद्धतेजा
हव्यं वहे स्वध्वर आज्यसिक्तम्
तं यज्ञियं पञ्चविधं च पञ्चभिः
स्विष्टं यजुर्भिः प्रणतोऽस्मि यज्ञम्

agnir uvāca
yat-tejasāhaṁ susamiddha-tejā
havyaṁ vahe svadhvara ājya-siktam
taṁ yajñiyaṁ pañca-vidhaṁ ca pañcabhiḥ
sviṣṭaṁ yajurbhiḥ praṇato 'smi yajñam

agniḥ—the fire-god; *uvāca*—said; *yat-tejasā*—by whose effulgence; *aham*—I; *su-samiddha-tejāḥ*—as luminous as blazing fire; *havyam*—offerings; *vahe*—I am accepting; *su-adhvare*—in the sacrifice; *ājya-siktam*—mixed with butter; *tam*—that; *yajñiyam*—the protector of the sacrifice; *pañca-vidham*—five; *ca*—and; *pañcabhiḥ*—by five; *su-iṣṭam*—worshiped; *yajurbhiḥ*—Vedic hymns; *praṇataḥ*—offer respectful obeisances; *asmi*—I; *yajñam*—to Yajña (Viṣṇu).

The fire-god said: My dear Lord, I offer my respectful obeisances unto You because by Your favor I am as luminous as blazing fire and I accept the offerings mixed with butter and offered in sacrifice. The five kinds of offerings according to the Yajur Veda are all Your different energies, and You are worshiped by five kinds of Vedic hymns. Sacrifice means Your Supreme Personality of Godhead.

PURPORT: ⑥ In the *Bhagavad-gītā* it is clearly said that *yajña* should be performed for Lord Viṣṇu. Lord Viṣṇu has one thousand popular, transcendental names, out of which one name is Yajña. It is clearly said that everything should be done for the satisfaction of Yajña, or Viṣṇu. All other actions a person may take are only causes for his bondage.

Everyone has to perform *yajña* according to the Vedic hymns. As stated in the *Upaniṣads,* fire, the altar, the auspicious full moon, the period of four months called *cāturmāsya,* the sacrificial animal, and the beverage called *soma* are necessary requisites, as are the specific hymns mentioned in the *Vedas* and composed of four letters. One hymn is as follows: *āśrāvayeti catur-akṣaraṁ astu śrauṣaḍ iti catur-akṣaraṁ yajeti dvābhyāṁ ye yajāmahaḥ.*

These mantras, chanted according to the *śruti* and *smṛti* literatures, are only to please Lord Viṣṇu. For the deliverance of those who are materially conditioned and attached to material enjoyment, performing *yajña* and following the rules and regulations of the four divisions of society and of spiritual life are recommended. It is said in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* that by offering sacrifice to Viṣṇu one can gradually be liberated. The whole target of life, therefore, is to please Lord Viṣṇu. That is *yajña.*

⑦ Any person who is in Kṛṣṇa consciousness has dedicated his life for the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa, the origin of all Viṣṇu forms, and by offering worship and *prasāda* daily, he becomes the best performer of *yajña.* ⑧ In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* it is clearly stated that in this age of Kali the only successful performance of *yajña,* or sacrifice, is *yajñaiḥ saṅkīrtana-prāyaiḥ:* the best type of sacrifice is simply to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. This *yajña* is offered before the form of Lord Caitanya, as other *yajñas* are offered before the form of Lord Viṣṇu. These recommendations are found in the Eleventh Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.*

Moreover, this *yajña* performance confirms that Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu is Viṣṇu Himself. As Lord Viṣṇu appeared at the Dakṣa *yajña* long, long ago, Lord Caitanya has appeared in this age to accept our *saṅkīrtana-yajña.*

42

देवा ऊचुः
पुरा कल्पापाये स्वकृतमुदरीकृत्य विकृतं
त्वमेवाद्यस्तस्मिन् सलिल उरगेन्द्राधिशयने
पुमान् शेषे सिद्धैर्हृदि विमृशिताध्यात्मपदविः
स एवाद्याक्ष्णोर्यः पथि चरसि भृत्यानवसि नः

devā ūcuḥ
purā kalpāpāye sva-kṛtam udarī-kṛtya vikṛtaṁ
tvam evādyas tasmin salila uragendrādhiśayane
pumān śeṣe siddhair hṛdi vimṛśitādhyātma-padaviḥ
sa evādyākṣṇor yaḥ pathi carasi bhṛtyān avasi naḥ

devāḥ—the demigods; *ūcuḥ*—said; *purā*—formerly; *kalpa-apāye*—at the devastation of the *kalpa; sva-kṛtam*—self-produced; *udarī-kṛtya*—having drawn within Your abdomen; *vikṛtam*—effect; *tvam*—You; *eva*—certainly; *ādyaḥ*—original; *tasmin*—in that; *salile*—water; *uraga-indra*—on Śeṣa; *adhiśayane*—on the bed; *pumān*—personality; *śeṣe*—taking rest; *siddhaiḥ*—by the liberated souls (like Sanaka, etc.); *hṛdi*—in the heart; *vimṛśita*—meditated on; *adhyātma-padaviḥ*—the path of philosophical speculation; *saḥ*—He; *eva*—certainly; *adya*—now; *akṣṇoḥ*—of both eyes; *yaḥ*—who; *pathi*—on the path; *carasi*—You move; *bhṛtyān*—servants; *avasi*—protect; *naḥ*—us.

The demigods said: Dear Lord, formerly, when there was a devastation, You conserved all the different energies of material manifestation. At that time, all the inhabitants of the higher planets, represented by such liberated souls as Sanaka, were meditating on You by philosophical speculation. You are therefore the original person, and You rest in the water of devastation on the bed of the Śeṣa snake. Now, today, You are visible to us, who are all Your servants. Please give us protection.

PURPORT: The devastation indicated in this verse is the partial devastation of the lower planets within the universe when Lord Brahmā goes to sleep. The higher planetary systems, beginning with Maharloka, Janaloka, and Tapoloka, are not inundated at the time of this devastation. ⑨ The Lord is the creator, as indicated in this verse, because the energies of creation are manifested through His body, and after annihilation, He conserves all the energy within His abdomen.

(6) According to the *Bhagavad-gītā,* for whom should *yajña* be performed?
(7) How is a person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness the best performer of *yajña*?
(8) Which *yajña* is recommended in Kali-yuga?
(9) In what way is the Lord the creator?

Another significant point in this verse is that the demigods said, "We are all Your servants (*bhṛtyān*). Give us Your protection." The demigods depend on the protection of Viṣṇu; they are not independent. ⑩ *Bhagavad-gītā,* therefore, condemns the worship of demigods because there is no need of it and clearly states that only those who have lost their sense go asking favors of the demigods. Generally, if anyone has material desires to be fulfilled, he can ask Viṣṇu instead of going to the demigods. Those who worship demigods are not very intelligent. Besides that, the demigods say, "We are Your eternal servants." So those who are servants, or devotees of the Lord, are not very much concerned with fruitive activities, the performance of the prescribed *yajñas,* or mental speculation. They simply serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead sincerely, with love and faith, performing everything with that loving service, and the Lord gives such devotees direct protection.

In *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa says, "Simply surrender unto Me, and I will give you protection from all the reactions of sinful activities." ⑪ This material world is so created that one has to act sinfully, knowingly or unknowingly, and unless his life is dedicated to Viṣṇu, he has to suffer all the reactions of sinful activities. But one who surrenders and dedicates his life for the service of the Lord has direct protection from the Lord. He has no fear of suffering from sinful activities, nor does he desire, willingly or unwillingly, to do anything which is sinful.

गन्धर्वा ऊचुः
43 अंशांशास्ते देव मरीच्यादय एते
ब्रह्मेन्द्राद्या देवगणा रुद्रपुरोगाः
क्रीडाभाण्डं विश्वमिदं यस्य विभूमन्
तस्मै नित्यं नाथ नमस्ते करवाम

gandharvā ūcuḥ
aṁśāṁśās te deva marīcy-ādaya ete
brahmendrādyā deva-gaṇā rudra-purogāḥ
krīḍā-bhāṇḍaṁ viśvam idaṁ yasya vibhūman
tasmai nityaṁ nātha namas te karavāma

gandharvāḥ—the Gandharvas; *ūcuḥ*—said; *aṁśa-aṁśāḥ*—parts and parcels of Your body; *te*—Your; *deva*—dear Lord; *marīci-ādayaḥ*—Marīci and the great sages; *ete*—these; *brahma-indra-ādyāḥ*—headed by Brahmā and Indra; *deva-gaṇāḥ*—the demigods; *rudra-purogāḥ*—having Lord Śiva as the chief; *krīḍā-bhāṇḍam*—a plaything; *viśvam*—the whole creation; *idam*—this; *yasya*—of whom; *vibhūman*—the Supreme Almighty Great; *tasmai*—unto Him; *nityam*—always; *nātha*—O Lord; *namaḥ*—respectful obeisances; *te*—unto You; *karavāma*—we offer.

The Gandharvas said: Dear Lord, all the demigods, including Lord Śiva, Lord Brahmā, Indra, and Marīci, and the great sages, are all only differentiated parts and parcels of Your body. You are the Supreme Almighty Great; the whole creation is just like a plaything for You. We always accept You as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and we offer our respectful obeisances unto You.

PURPORT: In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* it is said that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. There may be many gods, from Brahmā, Lord Śiva, Indra, and Candra down to the rulers of the lower planetary systems, the presidents, ministers, chairmen, and kings. In fact, anyone can think that he is God. That is the false, puffed-up conviction of material life.

Actually Viṣṇu is the Supreme Lord, but there is even one above Viṣṇu, for Viṣṇu is also the plenary portion of a part of Kṛṣṇa. ⑫ In this verse this is referred to by the word *aṁśāṁśāḥ,* which refers to part and parcel of a part and parcel. There are similar verses in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* which indicate that the Supreme Lord's parts and parcels again expand into other parts and parcels.

As described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,* there are many manifestations of Viṣṇu and many manifestations of living entities. Viṣṇu manifestations are called *svāṁśa,* partial manifestations, and the living entities are called *vibhinnāṁśa.* The demigods like Brahmā and Indra have been promoted to such exalted positions by pious activities and austerities, but actually Viṣṇu, or Kṛṣṇa, is the master of everyone. ⑬ In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* it is said, *ekale īśvara kṛṣṇa, āra saba bhṛtya.* This means that Kṛṣṇa alone is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and all others, even the *viṣṇu-tattva* and certainly the living entities, are His servitors. Baladeva is the immediate expansion of Kṛṣṇa. He also engages in the service of Kṛṣṇa, and certainly the ordinary living entities are serving. Everyone is created, constitutionally, for serving Kṛṣṇa.

Here the Gandharvas acknowledge that although the demigods may represent themselves as the Supreme, actually they are not supreme. Real supremacy belongs to Kṛṣṇa. *Kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam* is the statement of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam:* "Kṛṣṇa is the only Supreme Lord." ⑭ Worship of Kṛṣṇa alone, therefore, includes worship of all the parts and parcels, just as watering the root of a tree also waters all the branches, twigs, leaves, and flowers.

[*Continued in the next issue.*]

(10) Why does the *Bhagavad-gītā* condemn the worship of demigods?
(11) Why do we suffer in the material world?
(12) What does the word *aṁśāṁśāḥ* indicate about Lord Viṣṇu's position?
(13) What is the meaning of *ekale īśvara kṛṣṇa, āra saba bhṛtya*?
(14) What lesson is to be drawn from the analogy of "watering the root of a tree"?

INSPIRED BY MEMORIES OF EARLY ISKCON

"The Kṛṣṇa mantra awoke in me almost twenty-five years later, just as fresh and current as it had been in 1971 when I first heard it."

by Jāmbavatī Devī Dāsī

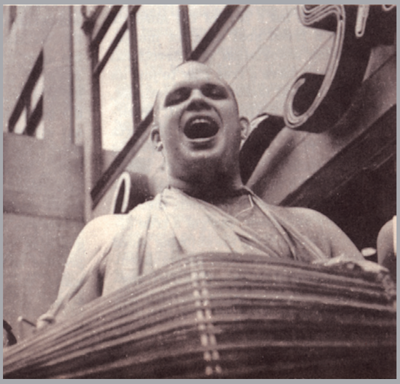
IN THE EARLY seventies, I traveled with my boyfriend in Europe. Even though I was nineteen, I felt emotionally insecure, having only recently left the safe structure of home and high school to strike out on the road with him. I didn't know where to turn for guidance, so I turned to music, listening for hours to the sounds of Jimi Hendrix, Simon & Garfunkel, Bob Dylan, and the Beatles. We started to travel and didn't stop for two or three years.

As we went, we encountered another sound, the transcendental sound of Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees chanting the *mahā-mantra:* Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. They said that this mantra comes directly from the spiritual world and has the power to reconnect us with God, or Kṛṣṇa, our origin and the origin of everything.

The devotees seemed to be everywhere—on busy city streets, in towns and city squares, in airports, at rock festivals. We saw them in Amsterdam, London, Frankfurt, and later in Berkeley, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. We saw them in the hundreds—young men dressed in saffron with shaven heads, and young women dressed in colorful saris and long dresses. In our minds they were the saintly Hare Kṛṣṇas, dancing, smiling, and chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra while playing on their drums. They were a glorious and comforting sight. Under the strong leadership of their spiritual master, Śrīla Prabhupāda, they were confident, happy, secure. They knew where they were going, how to get there, and exactly what they were doing. Everyone else (including me) was completely bewildered. Amid the hippies, drug addicts, traumatized veterans, freaks of every description, police and rioting students, the Hare Kṛṣṇas offered peace, shelter, delicious food, and most of all, knowledge. They had a solution for every problem and an answer to every question.

Though we were attracted to the Kṛṣṇas and visited their temples, we didn't want to join their community. I think it was because two members of our band were new devotees and were always fighting. We got a

“They’re Everywhere!”

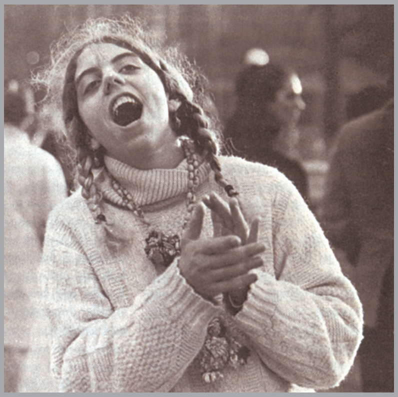

New York, 1969

Boston, 1970

BOSTON
COMMON
THIS IS YOUR PARK
KEEP IT CLEAN

Los Angeles, 1970

London, 1970


New York, 1970

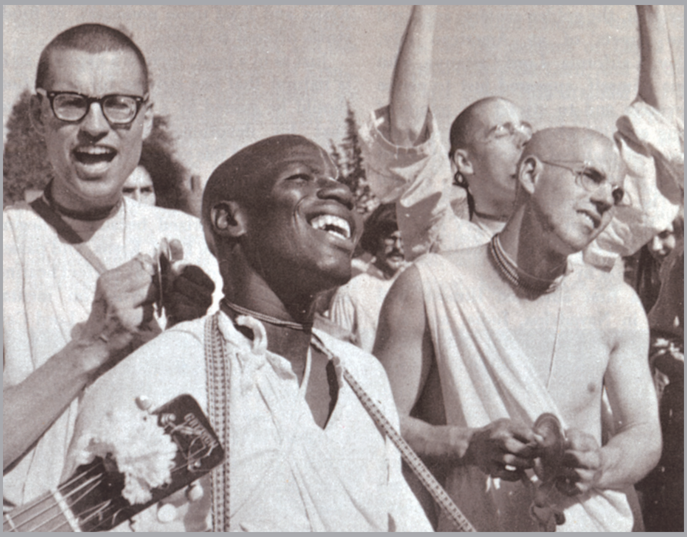
bad impression of what Kṛṣṇa consciousness is all about from them.

Before I knew it, the years and decades whizzed by and I lost contact with the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. But the Kṛṣṇa mantra awoke in me almost twenty-five years later, just as fresh and current as it had been in 1971 when I first heard it.

Leading Kīrtana in India

Eventually I moved to India, after reading perhaps thousands of books while searching for truth and suffering terribly in the painful karmic clench of the modes of nature. I wanted to know why I had to suffer so much. I found a guru who was a Śiva devotee and followed him to India. One day, being one of the only musicians in our group, I found myself sitting in front of a harmonium in a Hindu temple, wondering what to play. There were about a hundred people waiting to sing *bhajanas,* and I was supposed to lead them. With the pressure mounting,

San Francisco, 1969



Berkeley, 1970

Boston, 1970

my mind raced around and around trying to find a suitable *bhajana* that everyone would know. Finally I settled on the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. It had popped into my mind earlier that day, and I had worked out an arrangement for it on the harmonium. Even though I hadn't heard it for almost twenty-five years, it came back to me, melody and all, just as if I'd heard it recently. I was a little worried because most of these people were Śiva devotees, not Kṛṣṇa devotees. But I took a leap of faith and started singing the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.

To my immense relief, it worked. Soon the temple was ringing with the sounds of a hundred people playing *dolak* drums, *mṛdaṅgas,* tambourines, and *karatālas,* and chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra at the top of their voices. Their faces glowed with happiness. It was as if a heavy cloud had lifted and everything was made lighter and brighter. The happiness was contagious as more and more new people came in and found themselves chanting. Soon people began to dance, lifting their arms while chanting. Even the envious ones were forced by the jovial energy of the mantra to put smiles on their faces.

I stayed in India for almost three years, searching for truth. After all the effort it took to get there and live under austere conditions, I was disappointed to find that no one there, including the so-called guru I was with, seemed to know the truth. No one mentioned God, except to say that they thought the guru was God.

How to Put BTG in Your Will

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It is recommended that a lawyer help in drafting or amending a will.

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*If you live outside the USA, check the estate tax laws for your country.

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Through the years I spent in India, I often chanted the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra and sometimes would even imagine I saw Kṛṣṇa devotees coming up the steep mountainside to the remote Himalayan ashram where I was staying. But that was just wishful thinking.

Eventually I returned to the States to look after my health, which was poor from all the austerities and the rough mountain life. I landed in Florida. Not having any place to go, I began looking for my parents. In time I found my sister, who told me our parents had moved to Texas. I called my father, and he sent a ticket for me to come to Texas. So, as Prabhupāda's mercy would have it, I found myself in the same state as a bona fide spiritual master and disciple of Prabhupāda. As if being pulled by a magnet, I was drawn to the Austin Hare Kṛṣṇa center, where at last I found my spiritual master, His Grace Saṅkarṣana Dāsa Adhikārī. By his mercy I became an initiated disciple.

Looking Back

My life is so much better now that I have taken shelter of a real guru and Kṛṣṇa, but I still long for the association of all those devotees I saw everywhere in the seventies. Now, looking back, there is an aching in my heart, a longing to see them again—dancing, chanting, smiling, distributing their soul-saving books and *prasādam.* Oh, I miss them so! I very much regret that I did not join them back in '71.

I admit I may have a romanticized memory of those times, but it seems I could walk down practically any street and find devotees in large numbers dancing, chanting, and playing on their drums. I humbly pray that Śrīla Prabhupāda and Lord Kṛṣṇa will again bestow mercy on this world by bringing back to the streets the multitudes of dancing, chanting, smiling, saintly Hare Kṛṣṇas.

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT

The Chariot of the Mind

This exchange between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and Bhakti-svarūpa Dāmodara Swami, then a graduate student named Svarūpa Dāmodara Dāsa, took place in Los Angeles in January 1974.

Svarūpa Dāmodara Dāsa: Today's scientists and philosophers and psychologists say the only authority they can accept is their own mind.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: In Sanskrit they are called *mano-dharmī*—mental speculators.

SDD: But don't we have to experiment with different mental perspectives if we're going to understand the world?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Actually, mental speculators have been condemned—*mano-rathenā-sati dhāvato bahiḥ* [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 5.18.12]—because they are simply carried away by the chariot of the mind. The mind is flickering, always changing. *Saṅkalpa-vikalpa:* the mind's business is to accept something and again reject it. All these mental speculators are doing just that. Somebody's putting forward some theory, and after a few years he will himself reject it, or somebody else will reject it. So by mental speculation you will remain on the material, changing platform. You cannot get any lasting idea.

SDD: But the scientists feel strongly about their research. They're convinced they've done some real good for the world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: They think, "This is bad; that is good." But they do not know that in this material world, saying, "This is bad" and "That is good" is all mental speculation, all a mistake. They do not know that in this material world, "bad" and "good" are the same thing—because both are simply matter.

SDD: How can you say that "bad" and "good" are the same thing?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: For instance, when we are walking on this road, sometimes we say, "This is very good," and sometimes we say, "This is very bad." But the road is the same. So how is it both "good" and "bad"? This is simply speculation. Today we may say, "This road is dry; it is dusty. Bad." Tomorrow we may

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The Sunday Feast

Most Hare Kṛṣṇa centers around the world put on a special festival every Sunday—for regulars as well as newcomers. Come by and relish the taste of the world's oldest cultural tradition. Call your nearest center to find out the schedule for the Sunday Feast. (See "Centers," pages 57–61.)

say, "This road is dry; it is not at all muddy. Good." It is simply mental speculation.

SDD: It's still a bit hard to understand what you're saying.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Here is another example. In India the villagers pass stool out in the open fields. By the end of the day, the sun has left the top part of the stool dry. So when some fool sees the dry part of the stool, he may say, "Oh, this part is very nice." He forgets that after all, it is stool—so what is the difference whether it is dry or moist? In the same way, the scientists are making great advancement, but death is still there. So we have to ask, "What is the difference whether you make advancement or no advancement? One who has not advanced in science will die, and you so-called advanced people will also die. Then what is the use?" Neither the scientist nor the ordinary person can protect himself from death. Then what is the meaning of "good"—"This is good," "This is advancement"—or "This is not advancement"?

SDD: But I think the distinction between "good" and "bad" depends on the consciousness of the individual.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Relativity—the law of relativity: "One man's food is another man's poison." So how can you distinguish whether this is "food" or "poison"? One man will say, "No, it is food!" Another man will say, "It is poison!" So how will you distinguish? You see? This "good" and "bad" is simply mental speculation. Because it is on the material platform, there is nothing good. All that the scientists and philosophers are doing is cheating. They say, "We are advancing." In what way are you advancing? The problem of birth and death is still there—so what is the meaning of your advancement?

SDD: So we have to get off the chariot of the mind?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. If you remain on the chariot of the mind, then whatever you accept you'll have to reject again. And that is just what they are doing. The so-called scientists and philosophers are putting forward some theory, and after some time they reject it. So if you remain on the mental platform, then this business of accepting and rejecting will go on. You'll never come to a lasting conclusion. One has to rise to the spiritual platform. That is *nityaḥ śāśvato 'yam*—eternal, everlasting.

SDD: Are you saying everything in this world is worthless?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Just try to understand. It can have value and meaning. For instance, you can add thousands of 0's together, one after another, but the value will still be 0. It will never become 1. But by the side of 0, if you bring 1, immediately that becomes 10. Add another 0, immediately you have 100. You have increased it ten times. But that 1 must be there—that is *ekaṁ brahma,* the one Supreme Spirit. Then 0 increases in its value. Similarly, this material world is zero. Bad. But if there is Kṛṣṇa consciousness, then it has value.

SDD: Doesn't the chariot of the mind have any value at all?

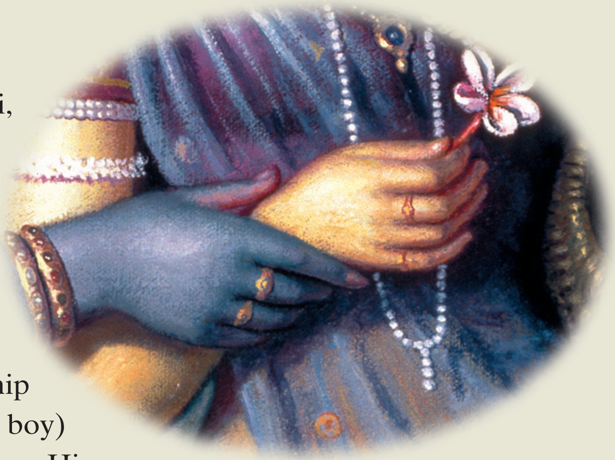
Śrīla Prabhupāda: No. It has no value.

SDD: But the whole Western philosophical—

Śrīla Prabhupāda: *Mano-rathenāsati dhāvato bahiḥ:* by mental speculation you'll remain in this temporary field. *Asat* means "that which does not exist." You take anything in this material world—some day it will not exist. Anyone knows it. A skyscraper is constructed, but everyone knows that it will not exist; some day it will fall down. Everyone knows. It will not endure. Therefore Prahlāda Mahārāja says, *māyā-sukhāya bharam udvahato vimūḍhān:* for illusory happiness people are making huge, gorgeous arrangements and working day and night. For something that will be zero. It has begun as zero, and it will end as zero; in the middle they are busy. Just see. Therefore they're *vimūḍhān*—fools and rascals.

Śrī Rādhā, “The Flower Thief”

Painting by Sac-cid-ānanda Dāsa



IN *VEṆU-GĪTĀ,* His Holiness Śivarāma Swami, drawing from books by *ācāryas* in Lord Caitanya’s line, tells of a dream that Śrī Kṛṣṇa has in which He quarrels with Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī over the proprietorship of Vṛndāvana. In the dream, Śrī Rādhā and her *gopī* (cowherd girl) friends are at the place known as Kusuma Sarovara, picking flowers for Rādhā’s daily worship of the sun. Kṛṣṇa arrives with His *gopa* (cowherd boy) friends and accuses the girls of stealing flowers from His property. Kṛṣṇa even grasps Rādhā’s wrist to stop Her from picking the flowers.

Rādhā contends that She is the real proprietor of Vṛndāvana and is in fact known as Vṛndāvaneśvarī, “the controller of Vṛndāvana.” With support from the *gopī* Lalitā, Rādhā presents many arguments to bolster her claim. Unable to defeat Her, Kṛṣṇa awakens from His dream.

A Special Rope

A significant detail of Sac-cid-ānanda Dāsa’s painting illustrating this pastime is the rope on Lord Kṛṣṇa’s shoulder. Known as *niryoga-pāśa,* the rope is used to tie a cow’s hind legs during milking. Śivarāma Swami writes: “The *niryoga-pāśa* is the insignia of Kṛṣṇa’s intent for all living entities, moving or nonmoving, conditioned or liberated. As He ties up the cows to take their milk, Śrī Kṛṣṇa desires to tie down His devotees with His love; as He milks the cows, Śrī Kṛṣṇa desires to extract the loving devotion of His *bhaktas;* and as the milk is the staple of the cowherd community, *prema-bhakti* is the only means of sustenance for Rasika-śekhara, the insatiable connoisseur of loving exchanges.

“The word *niryoga* means ‘to tie tightly.’ When the *gopīs* and creatures of Vraja see this rope, they understand Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s desire to be always engaged in intense loving pastimes. When it is tightly wound on His turban, it indicates that He has achieved success in firmly binding a devotee to His heart. When the rope is in His hand or loosely draped on His shoulder, it is understood that He is hunting for some fortunate soul upon whom He will throw His noose of love and entice him into its wonderful network.” (*Veṇu-gītā,* pp. 495–496)

Please turn page for the full painting →

Calendar

This calendar is calculated for Māyāpur, West Bengal, India. The dates, derived from a lunar calendar, may vary by one day for other locations. For the exact dates for your area, go to www.krishna.com/calendar.

Because the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement comes in disciplic line from Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the calendar includes not only dates relevant to all followers of the Vedic tradition but also dates relating to Lord Caitanya's associates and prominent spiritual masters in His disciplic succession.

Month of Vāmana

(July 1–30)

JULY

1—Disappearance of Śyāmānanda Paṇḍita, one of the principal followers of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

10—Disappearance anniversary of Śrī Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, one of the principal associates of Lord Caitanya.

11—Yoginī Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

14—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Gadādhara Paṇḍita, one of the principal associates of Lord Caitanya. Also, disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. Fasting till noon, then feasting.

15—Guṇḍicā-mārjana. Festival of cleansing the Gundicha temple in Jagannatha Puri, India.

16—Lord Jagannātha's Rathayātrā in Jagannatha Puri. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Svarūpa Dāmodara and Śrīla Śivānanda Sena, intimate associates of Lord Caitanya.

26—Śayanā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

30—Disappearance anniversary of Sanātana Gosvāmī, one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana. First month of Cāturmāsya begins (fasting from green leafy vegetables).

Month of Śrīdhara

(July 31–August 28)

AUGUST

3—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

6—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Lokanātha Gosvāmī, a great devotee of Lord Caitanya.

7—Anniversary of incorporation of ISKCON, in New York, 1966.

9—Kāmikā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

24—Pavitropanā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans. Jhulana Yātrā (swing festival) of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda begins.

25—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Gaurīdāsa Paṇḍita, an associate of Lord Caitanya.

28—Jhulana Yātrā ends. Appearance anniversary of Lord Balarāma. Fasting till noon, followed by feasting. Second month of Cāturmāsya begins (fasting from yogurt).

Month of Hṛṣīkeśa

(August 29–September 26)

29—Anniversary of the departure of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the United States in 1965.

SEPTEMBER

4—Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī, appearance anniversary of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Fasting till midnight, followed by a break-fast of Ekādaśī *prasādam* (no grains or beans). Feasting tomorrow. Call your local Hare Kṛṣṇa temple for a schedule of events.

5—Appearance anniversary of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-*Ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Fasting till noon, followed by feasting.

7—Annadā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

16—Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Sītā Devī, the consort of Śrīla Advaita Ācārya.

20—Śrī Rādhāṣṭamī, appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, Lord Kṛṣṇa's eternal consort. Fasting till noon, followed by feasting.

23—Parśvā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans. (Fasting till noon today for Śrī Vāmana-dvādaśī tomorrow.)

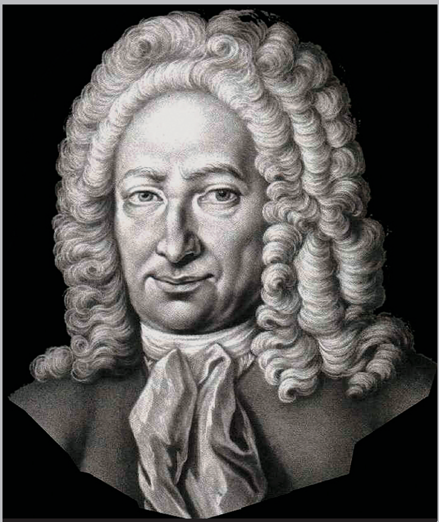
24—Appearance anniversary of Lord Vāmana, Lord Kṛṣṇa's incarnation as a dwarf *brāhmaṇa.* Appearance anniversary of Jīva Gosvāmī, one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

25—Appearance anniversary of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, father of Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura (Prabhupāda's spiritual master), and a pioneer in spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness in English. Fasting till noon, then feasting.

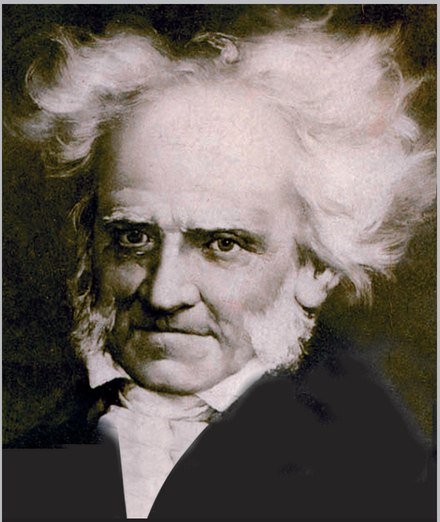
SOUR GRAPES AND THE VINE OF VEDIC KNOWLEDGE

Does Kṛṣṇa consciousness promote a pessimistic worldview?

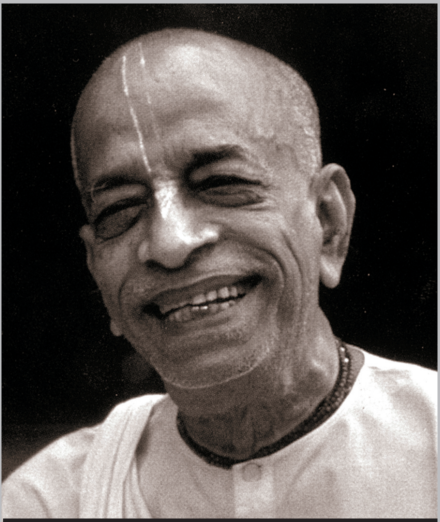
by Satyarāja Dāsa



"We don't want to see the end of pleasure, love, and life, and yet end they must."
—Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz



"Life exists largely in a state of unfulfilled striving and deprivation."
—Arthur Schopenhauer



"Real happiness must be appreciated by one's transcendental senses."
—Śrīla Prabhupāda

OOUUUCH!"

My dentist probably expected a more meaningful exchange, perhaps simple pleasantries or a friendly conversation. After all, he hadn't seen me for quite some time. But I was here to get down to business, and so was he. No time for light talk.

"Let's see," he said, looking into my mouth as if searching for gold. "You need a few fillings. Hmm. Root canal, for sure, and definitely a bridge, right back *here.*"

It was precisely at this point that the *oouuch* blurted out of my mouth. He poked once too often.

"Come on," I started. "The idea of all that dental work is depressing—it's going to cost way too much, and it's probably gonna hurt."

"I'm not saying this to depress you," he said, shaking his head. "That's not my motivation. These are the facts. Your teeth need attention, and they need it now."

That sent my mind back to a conversation I had had the day before, at the Sunday feast in the Brooklyn Hare Kṛṣṇa temple. I was explaining certain basic points of Kṛṣṇa conscious philosophy to a newcomer, telling her that the world is a place of misery, wherein repeated birth and death take place. We all go through birth, death, old age, and disease, I reminded her, and we all suffer from threefold miseries: those caused by our own bodies and minds, by the bodies and minds of others, and by natural calamities.

"Why are you so negative?" she asked.

I was a bit surprised by her reaction, so I explained that the negative philosophy at the base of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is only a starting point. Using this as a foundation—that the material world can be a nasty place—Kṛṣṇa consciousness goes on to explain how life can be truly blissful, not only in some hopeful future life but also within our own lifetime, in the here and now.

But now, sitting in my dentist's chair, I sounded a lot like that young woman. My dentist was only giving me the facts, explaining the state of rot in my mouth. Nonetheless, I found it necessary to rebel, to insist that he was being overly negative. Similarly, when I mentioned the obvious truth of life in an ever-decaying material world, my new friend at the temple needed to respond in kind, as if I was distorting the facts just to depress her.

Kṛṣṇa consciousness might appear pessimistic. But a closer look reveals that it transcends the usual duality of optimism and pessimism altogether.

Optimists, Pessimists, And Realists

People usually fall into one of two categories: optimists or pessimists. They view life as being basically a happy experience or a dismal one. Optimists see the cup as half full, whereas pessimists see it as half empty. These two types of people view the same phenomenon differently. Where would one place the devotees of Kṛṣṇa? Are they pessimists?

No, they are not. True, they are aware of the miseries of material existence, but that's called knowledge in the mode of goodness. Knowledge in the mode of ignorance, by contrast, is beleaguered by obliviousness—blindness to the pain and suffering that are very real components of the material world. In other words, Kṛṣṇa consciousness has much to say about the darker side of life, about the perils of being caught in a temporary material body. At first blush, therefore, Kṛṣṇa consciousness might appear pessimistic. But a deeper look reveals that it transcends the usual duality of optimism and pessimism altogether. Rather, it is what I would call "realism," or, better yet, "spiritual realism." That is to say, it is balanced. This is so because it is not a product of the usual conditioned responses, positive or negative, but it is instead the spiritual consciousness bequeathed to us by the saints and sages of the past. Indeed, Kṛṣṇa consciousness is like a precious gem, originally revealed by God, and then passed down by self-realized souls in disciplic succession, a lineage created by God to help all conditioned souls reach the ultimate spiritual truth.

Pessimism and the Western Philosophical Tradition

In popular language, the term *pessimist* is applied to people who habitually view life with intense melancholy, who view painful experiences as almost desirable—at least in the sense that they wouldn't know how to live any other way. Pain is familiar to them. In addition, such people generally have little corresponding appreciation for the pleasurable or positive side of life. Alternatively, pessimists sometimes *do* want happiness in the normal, positive sense of the word, but they are doubtful about the possibility of achieving it. These are two classic kinds of pessimism.

As a philosophical system, Pessimism addresses the presence of evil in the world, the built-in torment resulting from material limitations. Loved ones leave or die, situations to which we become attached soon change, fundamental anxieties find their way into our lives, especially that black hole of our own mortality—all cause suffering on both gross and subtle levels. In the West the philosopher Leibniz taught that pain is integral to finite and temporary existence. For example, he said, we don't want to see the end of pleasure, love, and life, and yet end they must. The principle from which pain and evil arise—the temporary quality of all things material—is thus viewed as an essential part of nature. This idea is clear in Buddhist thought as well, where the Four Noble Truths categorize suffering in various ways along with a coherent system for the cessation of suffering. And it is also taught in the *Bhagavad-gītā,* upon which Kṛṣṇa consciousness rests.

Arthur Schopenhauer is considered one of the fathers of Pessimism as a philosophical school of thought. His words, at least in regards to suffering, merely echo the truths found in the Vedic literature. Ultimately, Schopenhauer tells us, "All life is suffering." He explains this by noting that everything that lives has desire, wants, and needs. "Life wants," he says, "and because its wants are mostly unfulfilled, it exists largely in a state of unfulfilled striving and deprivation."

His analysis reminds me of something I said to my dentist: All materialistic endeavors for happiness fall into three broad categories, and they all result in misery: (1) You try for happiness and don't achieve it. You're miserable for obvious reasons. (2) You try for happiness and achieve it, but it doesn't live up to your expectations. Again you're miserable. (3) You try for happiness and get it, and it *does* live up to your expectations. But you lose it after some time. Is there any form of material happiness that doesn't fit into one of these three categories?

"And even that which we call 'happiness,'" says Schopenhauer, "is really only a temporary cessation of some particular suffering."

> All satisfaction, or what is commonly called happiness, is really and essentially always negative only, and never positive. It is not a gratification which comes to us originally and of itself, but it must always be the satisfaction of a wish. For desire, that is to say, want, is the precedent condition of every pleasure; but with the satisfaction, the desire and therefore the pleasure cease; and so the satisfaction or gratification can never be more than deliverance from a pain, from a want.

The Vedic tradition articulates this same idea. Śrīla Prabhupāda often referred to happiness in the material world as merely "the cessation of misery." He used the analogy of the dunking stool. To punish evil-doers, officers of the court used to tie criminals to a see-saw kind of dunking stool, easing them down into water and then, periodically, lifting them up again. Gasping for air, the convicted felon would enjoy the simple act of breathing as if it were the greatest pleasure. Likewise, Prabhupāda taught, because the material world is so devoid of any real enjoyment—of any substantive pleasure—the titillating sensations of the body and mind seem alluring, like a few precious breaths to a drowning person.

So Are Devotees Pessimistic?

It is clear from Prabhupāda's books that suffering is integral to material existence: "Out of so many human beings who are suffering, there are a few who are actually inquiring about their position, as to what they are, why they are put into this awkward position, and so on. Unless one is awakened to this position of questioning his suffering, unless he realizes that he doesn't want suffering but rather wants to make a solution to all suffering, then one is not to be considered a perfect human being. Humanity begins when this sort of inquiry is awakened in one's mind." (*Bhagavad-gītā As It Is,* Introduction)

The final sentence in the above quote reveals something about the purpose of suffering in the material world. It is meant to act as an impetus for the human being to inquire about God consciousness. After lifetimes of various kinds of suffering, the wise begin to ask, "What's life all about? Why am I here? Why should I go on suffering?" These questions separate humankind from the animals.

In Śrīla Prabhupāda's books he often reveals a kind of hierarchy of consciousness. On the most fundamental level, he says, one believes that the world is safe, that lasting pleasure exists here, and that one can live happily ever after. But he quickly adds that a life based on such thinking is like animal life, where eating, sleeping, mating, and defending are the primary activities and one has little time to pursue God consciousness. Human beings, he tells us, must move on from this basic, animalistic mentality. And if they advance even a little, he says, then they adopt something of a pessimistic view of life, acknowledging the limitations of material happiness, its shallowness and its temporary nature.

Significantly, however—and this is the main point—Prabhupāda also talks about a yet higher level of existence, wherein one bids adieu to pessimism and becomes situated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. From this perspective, life is full of meaning, full of purpose, full of bliss. It begins while serving Kṛṣṇa in the material world, and carries on when we attain His supreme kingdom.

Not Naive Optimists

Overall, devotees believe in hope rather than despair, tolerance rather than fear. They believe in love and not hatred, compassion not selfishness, beauty not ugliness,

(*please turn to page 56*)

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At one of India's greatest pilgrimage sites, a new Hare Kṛṣṇa temple showcases the special devotion of Lord Caitanya's line.

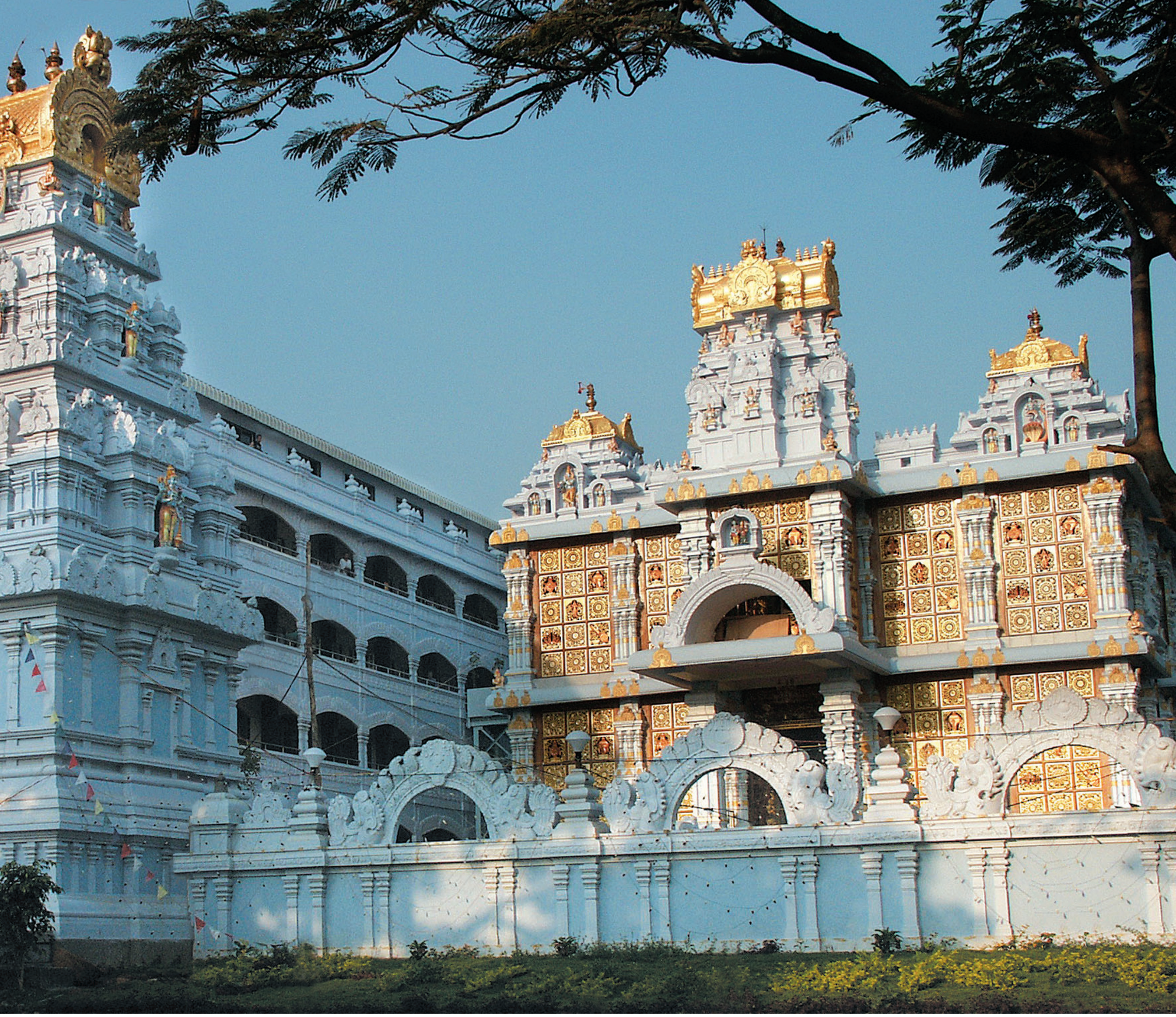
by Murāri Gupta Dāsa

ISKCON's Tirupati temple (above right) was built following strict guidelines prescribed in the Vedic scripture known as Vastu-śāstra. *The large building on the left houses a restaurant, residential quarters for* brahmacārīs *(unmarried celibate men), guest rooms, and administrative offices. Above: the temple* brahmacārīs *and some men from the congregation.*

Igor Hrstich

MORE THAN THREE decades ago Śrīla Prabhupāda desired to establish the worship of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in Tirupati, South India. Now Revatī Ramaṇa Dāsa, the temple president of ISKCON Tirupati, and the dedicated devotees there have fulfilled that desire in the most wonderful way.

Tirupati, in Andhra Pradesh, is home to the world's richest temple, where thousands visit daily to take *darśana* of the deity of Kṛṣṇa known as Śrī Vyeṅkateśvara or, more simply, Bālājī. In 1974 the government of Andhra Pradesh invited Śrīla Prabhupada to visit Tirupati. For two days he stayed on the Tirumala Hills,



where the famous temple is situated, and went three or four times daily to see the Bālājī deity. Whenever he went, the priests would allow Prabhupāda a private *darśana* for as long as he liked.

The efficient management of the temple impressed Prabhupāda, but his heart contemplated a much grander plan to please the Lord—by spreading His message. During a discussion with the state endowments minister, Śrīla Prabhupāda said that since T.T.D., the management committee of the Bālājī temple, had the basic infrastructure, it should take assistance from the devotees of ISKCON to conduct vigorous preaching for the benefit of all.

For his followers Śrīla Prabhupāda had another message: Build attractive temples like Bālājī's, with excellent arrangements for hosting pilgrims.

The Beginning

In 1982, T.T.D. provided ISKCON a large, beautiful piece of land at the foot of the Tirumala Hills, which are the incarnation of Ananta Śeṣa. In 1984, inspired by His Holiness Bhakti-svarūpa Dāmodara Swami, a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda, the devotees installed deities of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda and inaugurated a small temple.

Nothing developed until 1996, when His Holiness Jayapatāka Swami, ISKCON's governing body commissioner for Tirupati, revived the project. He appointed Revatī Ramaṇa Dāsa temple president and asked him to wholeheartedly pursue the project's development. Revatī Ramaṇa was willing, but progress didn't come easy.

"We began with a handful of devotees and meager finances," said Revatī Ramaṇa, "but by the mercy of the Lord we carried on, and in 1999 we held the ground-blessing ceremony for a magnificent new temple. Gradually more devotees came. With the help of a group of dedicated *brahmacārīs* and the blessings of the Vaiṣṇavas, things really got going."

Building with Books

To raise money for the temple, Revatī Ramaṇa employed a strategy that hadn't been tested in India: the sale of books on Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Tirupati is purely a pilgrimage place, without much business or industry; the major source of livelihood for the local people is visitors.

"We decided to develop a program for book sales," said Revatī Ramaṇa. "Every day nearly fifty thousand people visit this holy place, not just from India but from around the world."

The T.T.D. granted ISKCON an unheard-of concession: permission to sell Śrīla Prabhupāda's books in the temples under T.T.D. jurisdiction. Many other religious groups have tried unsuccessfully to get space in T.T.D. temples.

"The T.T.D. people like us," said Revatī Ramaṇa, "because we are preaching the same age-old *sanātana-dharma* that they follow."

Each day the devotees set up six book tables: two in the Tirumala Hills, one each at the Govindarāja and Padmāvatī temples in Tirupati, and two at the ISKCON temple. Tens of thousands of people see the devotees and interact with them, and the devotees sell thousands of

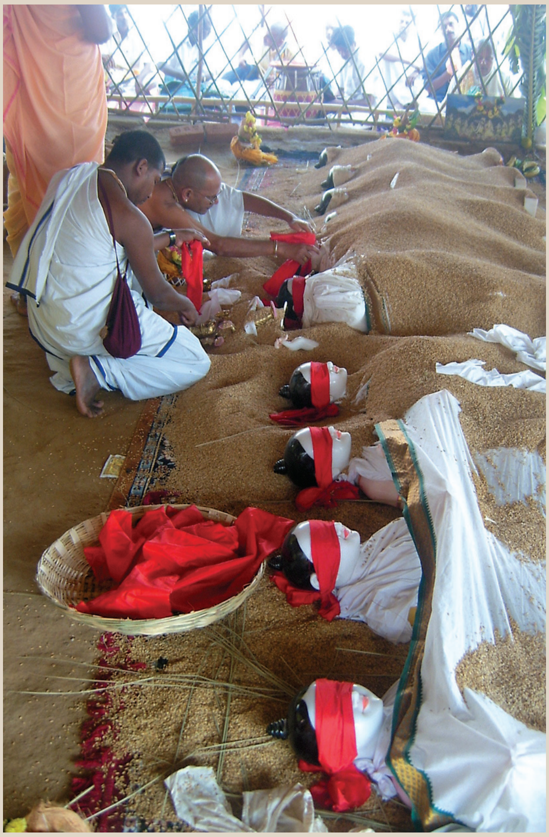
Devotees chant in front of a thatched-roof building (left and in photos below) erected for fire sacrifices and other rituals conducted during the temple inauguration. The pond in the northeast corner of the front courtyard (bottom, left) is a Vastu element. Below, Pedda Jeeyar Swami and Chinna Jeeyar Swami of the Bālājī temple (holding staffs) arrive with other priests to take part in the installation. At bottom, priests pour water into the pond during one of the opening ceremonies.

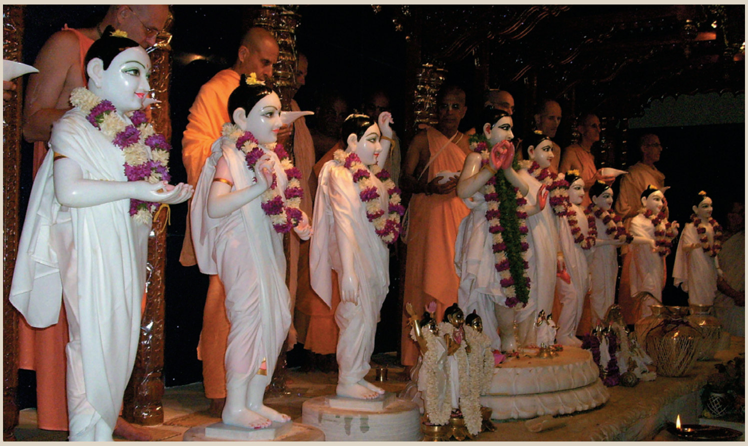
Installation Ceremony

January 29–31, 2007

THE THREE-DAY installation festival was widely advertised and attracted an overwhelming crowd. Besides the public, more than 7,500 registered devotees from India and fifty other countries, including forty-five from China, attended.

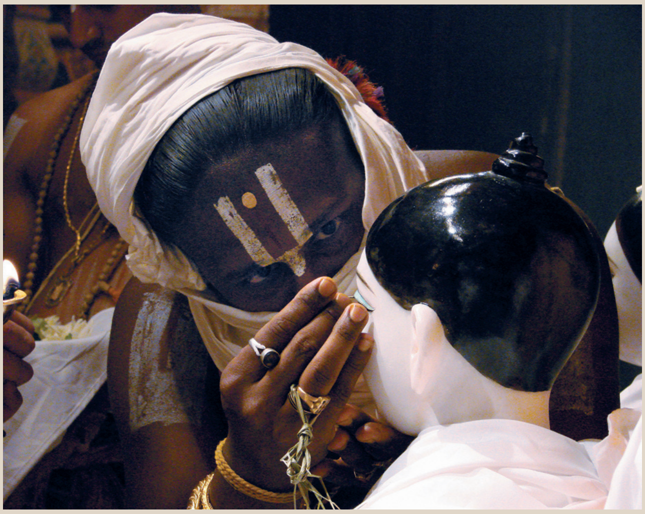
The temple bore a festive look with loops of garlands of orange and yellow marigolds, red roses, white jasmine, and folded green mango leaves decorating the exteriors. Colorful flowerpots lined the green front lawns. In the northeast corner, in front of a small pond, South Indian Śrī Vaiṣṇava *brāhmaṇas* from the Bālājī temple performed fire sacrifices in a large thatched-roof *yajña-śālā* (arena for sacrifice). Throughout the festival, a typical South Indian ensemble, with wooden drums, filled the air with music. Across the street, in a T.T.D. lot in front of

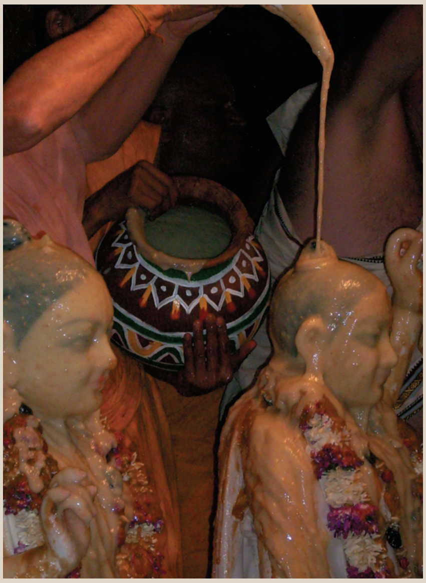




Rādhā-Govinda and the eight gopīs *(above) are ready for the bathing ceremony. At far left, the ceremony includes covering the deities in grain. At left, one of the* gopīs *enters the temple.*

Enthusiastic devotees (left) view the deities for the first time on the altar of the new temple. Below, Bālājī Swami, head priest of the Bālājī temple, attends to one of the deities during the netronmilanam *("eye-opening") ceremony. Cashew juice is poured over two* gopīs *(bottom).*





the temple, cultural programs, dramas, dances, and musical performances took place each evening.

The Jeeyar swamis of Tirumala Bālājī temple attended. They were scheduled to stay for one day but were so pleased that they stayed for all three days. Eighty-year-old His Holiness Pedda Jeeyar Swami Maharaja was very impressed by the devotional attitude of ISKCON devotees and said that their chanting of the holy names surpassed the rituals that the priests were doing.

Inviting the Lord

The installation ceremony is a process to invite the Lord to descend in the form of the deity to accept service from His devotees. Most of the parts of the ceremony go on behind closed doors. One of the most enchanting ceremonies was *śayanādhivāsam,* or placing the deities in an auspicious bed. During *jalādhivāsam* the deities slept on waterbeds. During *puṣpādhivāsam* night, They rested on a bed bedecked with fragrant flower petals. Gentle *kīrtana* with a lullaby effect was sung to induce Them to sleep. Then soft ragas were played on a *vina* (stringed instrument). Finally Revatī Ramaṇa Dāsa's daughter, Kumari Krishna Priya, performed a beautiful Bharat Natyam dance glorifying the Lord. All the while devotees fanned the Lord with *cāmara* and peacock-feather fans.

The *abhiśeka* (bathing) of the deities was another open ceremony. It was held on January 31, the divine appearance day of Lord Nityānanda. Śrī Rādhā-Govinda and the Aṣṭa Sakhīs wore white cloth and beautiful purple garlands. A large Girirāja Śilā (stone) with big lotus eyes and mouth rested beside Govinda's lotus feet. The deities were bathed with milk, yogurt, and numerous fruit juices. Loud cheers arose as devotees watched colorful red watermelon juice, green melon juice, orange papaya juice, brown chickoo juice, even cashew juice flow over the deities while an ecstatic *kīrtana* took place.

After four hours of *abhiśeka,* devotees lovingly smeared large quantities of pure sandalwood paste on Their Lordships and then washed Them with a shower of warm water poured through perforated pans.

Next it was time for applying scents. And what better way than to provide the most fragrant flowers? After drying the deities with soft towels, devotees covered Them with huge quantities of white jasmine flowers, yellow and orange marigold petals, red rose petals, and many other flower petals. Then the devotees tossed the petals into the crowd, and jubilation broke loose. Flower petals rained down, creating a fountain of flowers in front of the deities. The jubilant Tirupati devotees hoisted Revatī Ramaṇa Dāsa on their shoulders and danced in ecstasy.

Each column in the temple (right) has its own theme, depicted by bas-reliefs produced in West Bengal. Below, the altar design, with no front pillars, allows an unobstructed view of the deities.

Above, His Holiness Gopāla Kṛṣṇa Goswami carries Girirāja into the temple. Below, a Śrī Vaiṣṇava priest performs a fire sacrifice.

books every day. Book sales raised nearly sixty percent of the cost of building the temple.

The Temple

The first thing that strikes a visitor to Tirupati is the sheer number of colorful signs, billboards, and invitations that line the streets, boldly promoting *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* and describing the worldwide activities of ISKCON and Śrīla Prabhupāda. About a dozen billboards near the temple show beautiful pictures of Śrīla Prabhupāda and proclaim the wonderful gifts he gave the world.

At the base of the welcome tower, on the eastern side of the temple, slow running water bathes visitors' feet. From there one steps into the temple compound and beholds the marvelous temple, with its light blue color and gold-plated domes. The temple is a beautiful synthesis of traditional South Indian temple architecture and modern facilities.

The temple domes display sculptures of Kṛṣṇa, Rāma, Viṣṇu, and Nṛsiṁha. The temple has one *svāgata-gopuram* (welcome tower, representing the Lord's feet), one *rāja-gopuram* (grand tower, representing the Lord's navel), one *vimāna-gopuram* (tower above the deities' chamber, representing the Lord's head), and four corner domes representing the four *yugas,* or Vedic ages.

Marble steps lead visitors to the carved front doors and a first-floor veranda that encircles the auditorium. Two staircases in this front entry carry people upstairs to the temple hall, which fills the whole second floor.

The temple hall is a masterpiece of decoration. The ceiling, with five circular Thanjavur-style paintings, first attracts the eyes. A golden crisscross design stands out on its red background. The largest, central painting is of the divine couple Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, dressed and posed in South Indian style and surrounded by dancing associates. Gold embossing decorates their garments.

Huge chandeliers hang in the center of the room, while delicate ones, which slowly rotate, light the two long aisles of the hall. Along

Clockwise from below: one of the corner domes, painting Vṛndāvana scenes high on the temple wall, a Thanjavur-style gold-leaf painting of Bālājī on the temple ceiling, a custom-made chandelier, a rāsa-līlā *painting on the temple ceiling, a sculpture on the* gopuram *of the temple, one of the twelve carved wooden screens decorating the temple (these and the altar doors took three years to complete).*

Igor Hrstich

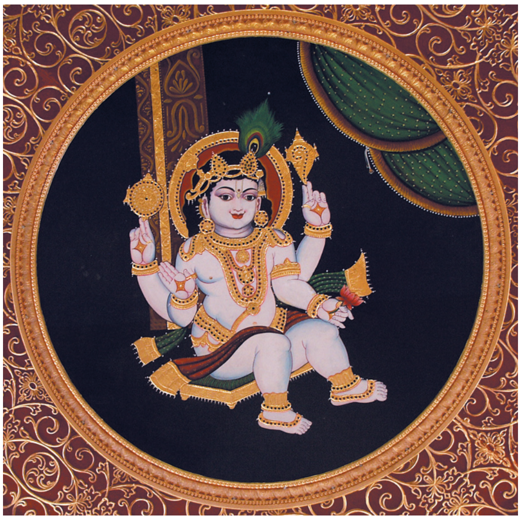
these two side aisles are also pillars, with four-sided sections containing bas-reliefs. The bas-reliefs on one side of the hall portray the Lord's pastimes in various incarnations; on the other side they depict His pastimes in various holy places in India.

Along the walls, huge bas-reliefs in carved wooden frames depict pastimes of the Lord. And tall three-piece windows boast colored, etched floral designs, along with images of Bālājī, His consort Padmāvatī, Lord Jagannātha, Lord Caitanya and Lord Nityānanda and Their lotus feet with all the auspicious markings, and the lotus feet of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. The shiny Egyptian marble floor and the painted decorations on the walls are no less intricate, their designs matching in craftsmanship the artwork all around.

The visual tour culminates in the sight of the forty-foot-long, gold-highlighted altar, from which preside Śrī Rādhā-Govinda, Aṣṭa Sakhī (the eight principal *gopīs*), Lord Caitanya, and Girirāja (Lord Kṛṣṇa in the form of a stone from Govardhana Hill). The absence of columns in front of the altar (achieved by using L-shaped iron supports sunk deep at the back of the altar) allows an unimpeded view of the deities. This is the first temple in South India where Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa are worshiped with Their eight principal *gopīs.*

The temple is designed to impart spiritual training and education. Thus the first floor houses a multimedia theater and auditorium with seating for three hundred, and the veranda around it contains book tables and displays that visitors can read. The ground floor contains both a hall that can seat one thousand and dioramas along the walls

Igor Hrstich



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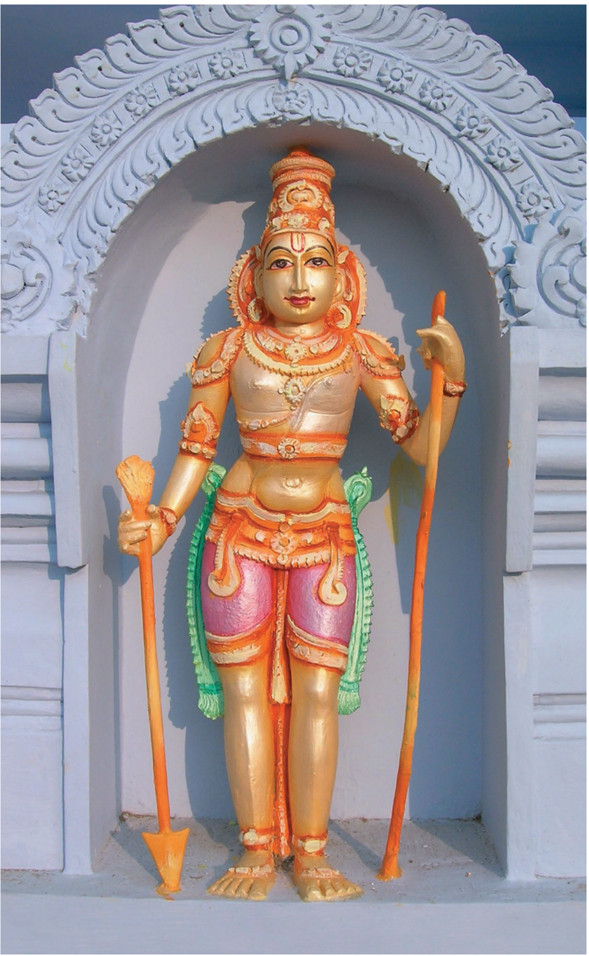

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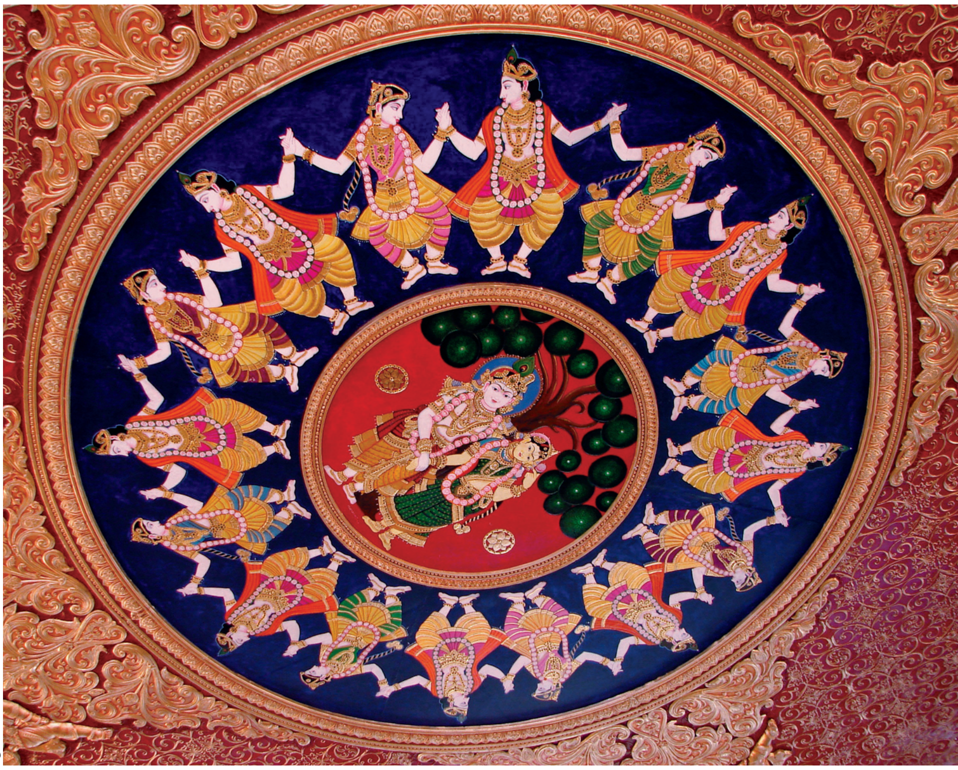


Igor Hrstich

The opening ceremonies include a procession through the streets of Tirupati (above). A traditional South Indian band (right) wanders through the temple grounds during the celebrations. At far right, students from ISKCON's school in Māyāpur, West Bengal, perform kīrtana *with devotion and musical expertise.*

that depict scriptural truths and pastimes. There is also a well-furnished five-story guesthouse with conference rooms and a Govinda's Restaurant beside the temple.

Goloka in Vaikuṇṭha

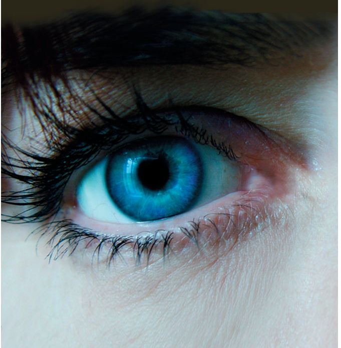
Tirupati is one of the holiest places of pilgrimage for the Śrī Vaiṣṇavas, who worship the Lord in awe and reverence, or the Vaikuṇṭha mood. Now, by making this temple of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, the Aṣṭa Sakhīs, and Lord Caitanya, ISKCON has brought the intimate loving mood of Vṛndāvana to Tirupati. Thus not only has Śrīla Prabhupāda's cherished desire been fulfilled, but the doors of Goloka have been opened for the residents of Vaikuṇṭha.

Murāri Gupta Dāsa is a disciple of His Holiness Rādhānātha Swami. He has Bachelor's degrees in medicine and surgery (M.B.B.S) and serves full-time at ISKCON Chowpatty. He is part of the production team of the Hindi and the India English editions of BTG. He also teaches Kṛṣṇa consciousness to college students in Mumbai.

With reporting from Dīnabandhu Dāsa from Vrindavana; Tattva-vit Dāsa; Rāma Murāri Dāsa and Madhugopāla Hari Dāsa from ISKCON Tirupati.

THE VEDIC OBSERVER

Transcendental Commentary on the Issues of the Day



Photographer: Susan Quinland-Stringer / Agency: Dreamstime.com

The Real Holy War Is Within

by Kṛṣṇa Dharma Dāsa

THE SIMILARITIES between the bombings in Mumbai and those in London and Madrid made it fairly obvious that religious fundamentalists were involved. Some observers suggested that India's improved relations with the U.S., culminating in an agreement to share nuclear technology, could have given Muslim extremists extra impetus to attack.

"Anybody seen to be part of the U.S. camp automatically becomes a target of Muslim extremists," said security analyst Ashok Mehta.

Without doubt there are those out there who see themselves as waging a religious war. Osama bin Laden has issued a rallying call to his followers to fight a "jihad for the sake of God, urged by his prophet." In the book *Celsius 7/7,* historian Michael Gove argues that Islamic fundamentalism is "prosecuting a total war in the service of a pitiless ideology."

Pitiless is a word that quickly comes to mind when we hear about the helpless men, women, and children blown to bits as they go about their daily lives. Whatever political or other grievances there may be, what kind of person can do such a thing? Could a truly godly or saintly person ever contemplate such an act?

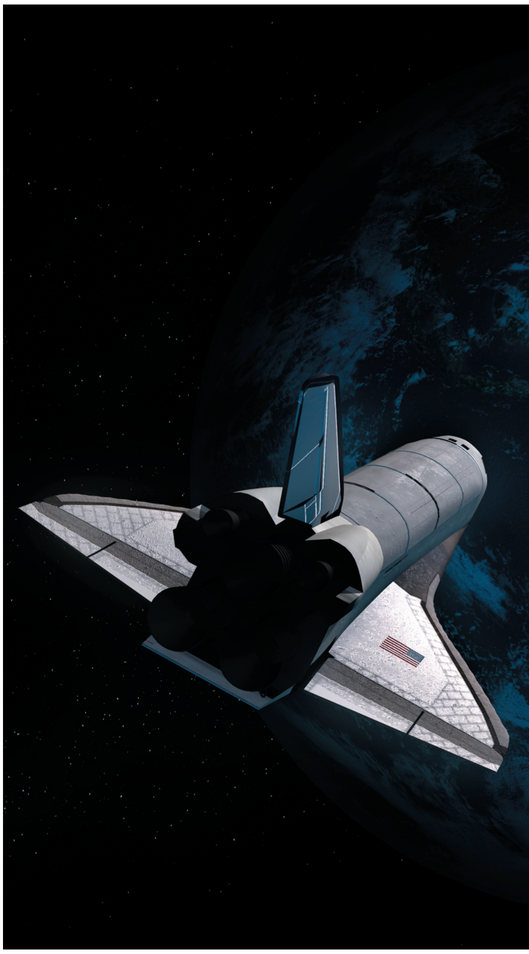
Understanding God's Will

Sadly, of course, war is not always avoidable, and followers of the *Vedas* accept the possibility of religious war; after all, *Bhagavad-gītā* was spoken on a battlefield. But such a war and indeed the warriors involved bear little resemblance to what we see today. First of all, before a genuinely religious person will fight he must be sure that it really is God's desire and will bring about an auspicious result. Kṛṣṇa spoke the *Gītā* to convince Arjuna of this point. And Kṛṣṇa made it clear that Arjuna was able to understand the teachings only because of his pure heart.

The *Vedas* explain that no matter what our religious path is, unless we have been purified by spiritual practice we will be unable to properly understand the true path of religion, or in other words, the divine will of God. Until we are pure in heart and mind, we will likely filter even our reading of scripture through the murky lens of our own desires and dislikes, possibly resulting in a misguided application of scripture, which can lead to harshness, anger, and envy. On the other hand, one who has actually understood religion will exhibit the very opposite qualities: kindness, gentleness, and a heart melted with love.

Warriors with True Character

Arjuna is a good example. He was a mighty warrior who, along with all his family members, had been repeatedly antagonized by his opponents. Still, before the war began he became overwhelmed by compassion, even for his enemies, and did not want to fight. He was ready to walk away and hand his opponents a bloodless victory rather than kill them for the sake of a kingdom. Although this was not ultimately what the Lord wanted, Arjuna's sentiment is praised as being typical of a saintly person.



Arjuna's brother Yudhiṣṭhira felt similarly. He had been the emperor of the globe, but by deceit and intrigues his kingdom and everything else were taken away. Yet he was prepared to forgive those responsible rather than fight. He asked for only a few villages so that he might do his duty as a king and administrator. When this was refused, war became inevitable. But what were the rules of engagement? The fight was only between warriors, and far away from where innocent people lived. The idea of harming ordinary people, especially women and children, was anathema to such warriors. Indeed they saw it as their God-given duty to protect the weak and vulnerable, not target them with fearsome weapons. Now we are subjected to harrowing images of helpless men begging for their lives and being brutally slaughtered, but Vedic warriors would not even kill another warrior if he was helpless and asking for mercy.

Another great saintly warrior who fought in the battle with Arjuna was Bhīṣma. He knew that one of his enemies had been a woman in the last life. Bhīṣma would not even look at him in the battle, even when being fiercely attacked by him.

No doubt fighters these days could learn much from such great virtuous heroes of the past. Perhaps, though, the most important lesson we can all learn is that fighting for God's will means fighting first our own inner demons. The *Gītā* makes clear that a person who has overcome his own ignorance feels love for both God and all living beings, seeing them as parts of the Supreme. He acts only for their welfare, driven by a desire to uplift them. Just by hearing about such true saints, we feel edified and deeply pacified. Compare that to the way we feel when we hear of the awful atrocities that have sadly become so commonplace today. Holy wars? Hardly.

Kṛṣṇa Dharma Dāsa, who lives in London, has written retellings of the Mahābhārata, Rāmāyaṇa, *and* Pañca Tantra. *His website is www.krishnadharma.com.*

Bhagavad-gītā in Outer Space

by Nanda Dulāla Dāsa

MRS. SUNITA WILLIAMS was onboard a December launch of the U.S. space shuttle *Discovery.* Sunita's parents are from Gujarat, India, and though raised in the U.S., she has been exposed to Indian culture. In her luggage for the space flight, Sunita carried along some *samosas,* a deity of Gaṇeśa, and a *Bhagavad-gītā.*

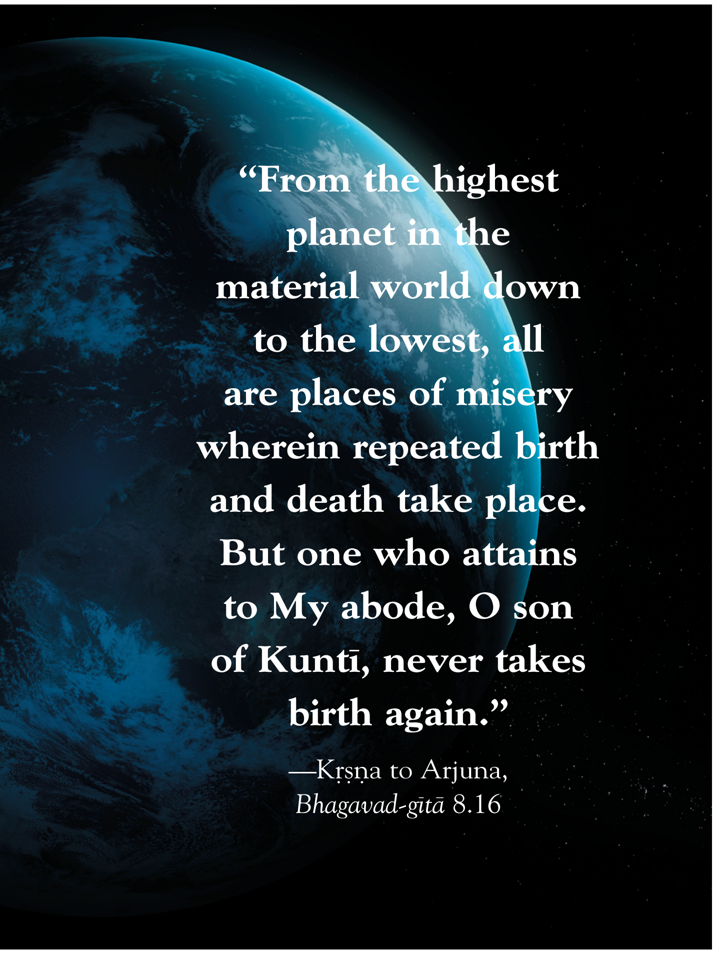
Mankind has long felt the drive to conquer the unknown, the mysterious. First came the lure of seas and foreign lands; now endless space beckons. We want to visit other planets, even live in outer space. And that's natural, because as a spirit soul, we have the constitutional right to go to any part of the material or the spiritual skies.

The uninformed might think that this temptation to conquer space is only recent. But Lord Kṛṣṇa in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (8.16) says, *ā-brahma-bhuvanāl lokāḥ punar āvartino 'rjuna*: "My dear Arjuna, even if you go to the highest planet, Brahmaloka, you will have to come back." This statement has two implications for us. First, interplanetary travel is not new to the human race. It took place in Vedic times. For example, The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* tells of King Kakudmī's trip to Brahmaloka and Bhṛgu Muni's travels to Brahmaloka, Mount Kailāsa, and Vaikuṇṭha. Second, and more important, according to the Lord Himself even if someone succeeds in going to the higher planets, his efforts are ultimately fruitless. Imagine someone investing in a company knowing well that it is rushing toward bankruptcy. He would surely be considered a fool. But we ourselves fail to understand that everything in the material world, including the planets around us, is temporary and so everything we invest here is fruitless.

The *Vedas* do recommend many sacrifices for elevation to the heavenly planets, and some scholars even think that this is the whole purpose of Vedic wisdom. But the reality is something else. Why should we waste our time trying to go to a place that will one day be destroyed? Today, people move frequently; they don't like to stay in the same apartment for more than a few years. This tendency exists because all of us are away from our original, permanent home: the spiritual world, where Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa resides. Searching for a suitable residence within the temporary material world will never work out. So, paying heed to Lord Kṛṣṇa's advice, we should all try to go to Kṛṣṇaloka. *Paras tasmāt tu bhāvo 'nyo 'vyakto 'vyaktāt sanātanaḥ* (*Bhagavad-gītā* 8.20). A life of eternity, bliss, and knowledge awaits us there.

On the other hand, life in the material world is just like prison life. Just as a prisoner cannot freely change from one cell to another, we cannot move

(*please turn to page 56*)



"From the highest planet in the material world down to the lowest, all are places of misery wherein repeated birth and death take place. But one who attains to My abode, O son of Kuntī, never takes birth again."

—Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna, *Bhagavad-gītā* 8.16

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In your own

What's your favorite type of devotional service, and why?

Hearing, one of the nine processes

of *bhakti,* is my favorite devotional service. I first got the opportunity to hear about the Lord from his devotees during the inauguration of Bhaktivedanta Hospital in Mumbai, where many of Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples spoke. After listening to them for more than four hours at one time, I was inspired to take to the process of devotional service.

A few weeks later, I visited the ISKCON temple in Pune, where I again had the opportunity to hear about Kṛṣṇa for four days, this time from Rādhānātha Swami. I left a totally different person. My priorities in life had changed. Now my aim was to please Kṛṣṇa and his devotees. I started chanting sixteen rounds and followed the four regulative principles sincerely.

My childhood friends, who did not share my hearing experience, were surprised by the sudden change in me. They tried to deter me from my aim, but to no avail.

Later, I read in Śrīla Prabhupāda's books that one who listens to Kṛṣṇa conscious topics attentively develops taste for the holy name and advances quickly.

Sameer Talwalkar
Palghar, India

Harināma-saṅkīrtana,

public chanting of the holy names, is my favorite type of devotional service. Being shy as I am, I admit it's also the most difficult service for me, yet I know that it is the most pleasing to Śrīla Prabhupāda and Lord Caitanya.

Besides that, I love to see the reactions on people's faces. So many smile and wave, hold their cell phones up to the music, express an interest in one of the *harināma* instruments, or join in and dance. Others will only stop and observe from a distance, while some will even toss a few obscenities our way.

But however they react, it touches me to know that this particular *harināma* party, on this particular day, in this particular place, is planting the seed of devotional service in this soul's heart, destined to sprout in its own time and start them on their path back to the service of the Lord.

Karuṇāmayī Dāsī
Burnaby, Canada

Devotees chant in front of the University of Florida in Gainesville. Photo montage by university student Alex Kirkwood.

words . . .

Pentip photographer: Andrea Leone | Agency: Dreamstime.com

Congregational chanting

of the holy names is my favorite devotional service. It's supremely authorized because *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* says it's the dharma for this age, and Lord Caitanya declared it the prime benediction for humanity. Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura says it's imported from Kṛṣṇa's abode, where every word is a song and every step a dance.

As devotees of Kṛṣṇa, we say that spiritual pleasure surpasses material. Through our public chanting we mercifully share spiritual joy and attract fortunate souls.

Here's a typical story about the effects of *harināma-saṅkīrtana:* One time a cruising teenager spotted a group of devotees happily dancing and chanting. He thought, "That's what I should be doing." In two weeks he joined the temple, then became initiated by Śrīla Prabhupāda, and many years later still loves to chant.

Harināma-saṅkīrtana is pleasurable, accessible, and spiritually uplifting, for both ourselves and others.

Kṛṣṇa-kṛpā Dāsa
Gainesville, Florida

I love my devotional service of writing

to inmates and sending them Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. It is so fulfilling to see these forgotten souls grow in their spiritual practices. I receive such wonderful feedback and many questions about how they can improve their service given their unique situations. It is so enlivening to hear about the programs they are forming in their prisons and the new devotees that arise from these. One man said that his cellmate begged him to keep chanting, because he just loves the sound of it.

In the end, we are all prisoners here in the material world, and we must help all our fellow souls find their way to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Here at the ISKCON Prison Ministry, we are "prisoners helping prisoners." It is a wonderful service.

Heather Hovey
Tucson, Arizona

Making garlands for the deities

is my favorite type of devotional service. When I look at the flowers I always think, "These flowers will become more beautiful when they are adorning the necks of the deities; their fragrance will increase more when they are on the hand of the Lord." I love threading each flower, arranging it carefully, and finally seeing Kṛṣṇa become more beautiful being decorated with garlands, and the flowers become more beautiful being used in Kṛṣṇa's service.

Mālatī Dāsī
Mataram, Indonesia

Raising my child

is my favorite type of devotional service, because it's a service I cannot forget even for a minute. It also has no ulterior motives—my only motive is to see my daughter as a devotee before I leave this body—and is uninterrupted, since she is always with me.

Additionally, it forces me to strive to become an ideal devotee myself, in order to set the perfect example for my child.

Just as Kṛṣṇa gives natural ability and duty to other creatures to nurture and protect their little ones from danger, I feel that He has given me, as a human mother, this occupational duty to help another soul understand the science of God.

Geetshri Borgaonkar
Plainsboro, New Jersey

I love chanting japa.

I didn't have to acquire a taste for it; the bliss was always there. It's the very foundation of my existence and the peace it brings is incomparable.

Chanting reaches down into the depths of my soul and purifies my heart and consciousness. As I utter the holy names, I am truly at home with myself and in my right position. It feels so wonderful. And when I'm out of sorts, I simply chant more rounds until I get to my right position of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

My heart is truly grateful that Śrīla Prabhupāda came and gave us this process. It's the perfect way to express my love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Bhaktilīlā Dāsī
Forest Ranch, California

Nothing is sweeter than serving devotees!

Whether it's driving them to the temple or to devotee association groups, giving them medical advice, or assisting their service, the most rewarding activity for me is to help those who have committed their lives to Śrīla Prabhupāda's movement. I am only an aspiring devotee, and I feel that by serving and associating with senior devotees, maybe I will get a drop of the devotion they have for our sweet Kṛṣṇa.

Rupali Chadha
Towson, Maryland

HERE'S THE NEXT QUESTION:

What element of Hare Kṛṣṇa culture do you find most humorous?

Go to Krishna.com/inyourownwords and let us know. Please keep your answer to under 150 words. Replies will appear in our Nov/Dec issue. Deadline for submissions is Aug 15.

VEDIC KNOWLEDGE

(*continued from page 39*)

and realized knowledge not blind faith or irrationality. They believe in working hard for the true betterment of humankind, and they give their time and life to help other people. These are not the virtues of the pessimist.

But devotees aren't naive optimists either. They don't believe that all humans will necessarily pursue higher goals. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is a pragmatic philosophy—humans are not necessarily good or evil but they do have the capacity for both. For this reason Śrīla Prabhupāda set up his institution (ISKCON) to encourage the ultimate good while discouraging not only the overtly evil but also goodness diluted by materialism.

On that point many may look at devotees somewhat askance, wondering why they are not more involved in social work or altruistic endeavors. The truth is, devotees favor these things, but they prefer to spiritualize them, to bring them to the next level by using them in Kṛṣṇa's service. For example, devotees believe in feeding people, but they insist on feeding them Kṛṣṇa *prasādam,* sumptuous vegetarian cuisine that has been offered to Kṛṣṇa with love. *Prasādam* distribution is the epitome of food distribution because it nourishes people both materially and spiritually. Devotees favor this kind of holistic endeavor, one they believe can help people overcome evil and pain.

And that's the question: How *are* we supposed to overcome evil and human suffering? Many traditional religions teach that we can overcome these only in an afterlife where a benevolent God rules in His paradisiacal kingdom. Kṛṣṇa consciousness, however, rejects the idea that we must wait for some pie-in-the-sky future. Yes, those who are Kṛṣṇa conscious have secured a place for themselves in the hereafter, with Kṛṣṇa in the spiritual world. But that is not their chief concern. Instead, Prabhupāda taught devotees that the fight against human suffering and evil must occur here and now. Since each of us is responsible for that which goes wrong in our lives, we are also responsible for making things right. Kṛṣṇa consciousness teaches that we can indeed make things right, but only if we surrender to God, with a heart full of love and devotion. Devotees try to do that in their own lives, and they teach others the same principle.

Prabhupāda concludes:

> Knowledge means understanding how the supreme controller is controlling. People who defy religion and deny the existence of a supreme controller are like the jackal that keeps jumping and jumping, trying to reach grapes on a high vine. After seeing that he cannot reach the grapes, he says to himself, "Oh, there is no need to reach them. They are sour anyway." People who say that we do not need to understand God are indulging in sour grape philosophy.

Prabhupāda here turns the "devotee as pessimist" idea on its head. He sees the materialist as pessimistic—as rejecting God because of a "sour grapes" kind of philosophy. Indeed, from the Vedic perspective the devotees have the greatest hope for humankind—to engage them in Kṛṣṇa's service—while the materialists are hopeless, having given up the quest to understand God. And in this hopelessness they sometimes view devotees as negative.

But devotees value this world more than anyone else, because they see it in relation to God. Some people will be pleased by this vision: "Right. It is important to see God in His creation. But why, then, do you devotees tend to emphasize the Creator instead?" The reason is quite simple: Devotees know that focusing on the creation can distract a person from the Creator. Therefore, devotees emphasize the Creator to help one avoid the pitfall of becoming sidetracked. Until one learns to focus on God, the relationship between Him and His creation remains an abstraction. This is not sour grapes; it's just a fact of life. ❁

Satyarāja Dāsa, a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda, is a BTG associate editor. He has written over twenty books. He lives with his wife and daughter near New York City.

OUTER SPACE

(*continued form page 53*)

from one planet to another. Under the laws of God, we are on earth because of our karma. Even if we could go from one planet to another, that would not make us happy, any more than changing from one cell to another will make a prisoner happy. We can be truly happy only in the spiritual world, outside the prison walls of the material world.

If we simply take to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa's instructions and try to engage in His devotional service, we will be granted eternal residence on His planet. Then the temptation to venture out into space won't haunt us. Lord Kṛṣṇa says (*Bhagavad-gītā* 8.15):

mām upetya punar janma
duḥkhālayam aśāśvatam
nāpnuvanti mahātmānaḥ
saṁsiddhiṁ paramāṁ gatāḥ

"After attaining Me, the great souls, who are yogīs in devotion, never return to this temporary world, which is full of miseries, because they have attained the highest perfection." Though we are tempted by the impermanent, we should aim for the permanent.

I can only wish that Sunita the astronaut glanced through the pages of *Bhagavad-gītā* during her stay in outer space and was attracted to the descriptions of the spiritual world. That would be to her true and lasting benefit. ❁

Nanda Dulāla Dāsa joined ISKCON in India in 2000. He is part of the BTG India team and helps in teaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness to college students in Mumbai.

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Kazan — 13, Sortirovochnaya st, pos.Yudino/ Tel. +7 (8432) 55-2529 or 42-9991
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Moscow — 8/3, Khoroshevskoye sh. (mail: P.O. Box 69), 125284/ Tel. +7 (095) 255-6711/ Tel. & fax: +7 (095) 945-3317
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Newcastle — Govinda's Vegetarian Cafe, 110 King Street, corner of King & Wolf Streets, NSW 2300/ Tel. +61 (02) 4929-6900 / E-mail: info@govindascafe.com.au
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Lautoka, Fiji — 5 Tavewa Ave. (mail: P.O. Box 125)/ Tel. +679 666 4112/ E-mail: regprakash@excite.com
Nausori, Fiji — Hare Krishna Cultural Centre, 2nd Floor, Shop & Save Building 11 Gulam Nadi St., Nausori Town (mail: P.O. Box 2183, Govt. Bldgs., Suva)/ Tel. +679 9969748 or 3475097/ Fax: +679 3477436/ E-mail: vdas@frca.org.fj
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Wellington, NZ — Gaura Yoga Centre, 1st Floor, 175 Vivian St. (mail: P.O. Box 6271, Marion Square)/ Tel. +64 (04) 801-5500

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Auckland, NZ (New Varshan) — Hwy. 28, Riverhead, next to Huapai Golf Course (mail: R.D. 2, Kumeu)/ Tel. +64 (09) 412-8075/ Fax: +64 (09) 412-7130

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Lautoka, Fiji — Gopal's, Corner of Yasawa St. and Naviti St./ Tel. +679 662990
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Suva, Fiji — Hare Krishna Vegetarian Restaurant, Opposite University of the South Pacific, Laucala Bay Rd./ Tel. +679 311683/ E-mail: vdas@govnet.gov.fj
Suva, Fiji — Hare Krishna Vegetarian Restaurant, 18 Pratt St./ Tel. +679 314154
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Nkawkaw — P. O. Box 69
Sunyani — Plot No. 146, South Ridge Estates (mail P.O. Box 685)
Takoradi — New Amanful, P.O. Box 328
Tarkwa — State Housing Estate, Cyanide

RURAL COMMUNITY

Eastern Region — Hare Krishna Farm Community, P.O. Box 15, Old Akrade

NIGERIA
Abeokuta — Ibadan Rd., Obanatoka (mail: P.O. Box 5177)
Benin City — 108, Lagos-Uselu Rd. (mail: P.O. Box 1207)/ Tel. +234 (052) 258636
Enugu — 5/6, Destiny Layout, Old Abakaliki Rd., Near Enugu Airport, Emene
Ibadan — Ibadan-Lagos Express Way, Opposite Ile-Marun (mail: UIPO Box 9996)/ E-mail: gboyega@ibadan.skannet.com
Jos — Airforce Base, Abattoir Rd., by Nammua, Giring Village (mail: P.O. Box 6557)
Kaduna — Federal Housing Estate, Abuja Rd. (mail: P.O. Box 1121), Goningora Village/ Tel. +234 (062) 231335
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Port Harcourt — Umuebule 11, 2nd tarred road (mail: P.O. Box 4429), Trans Amadi
Warri — Okwodiete Village, Kilo 8, Effurun/Orerokpe Rd. (mail: P.O. Box 1922)

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Pretoria — 1189 Church St., Hatfield 0083 (mail: P.O. Box 14077, Hatfield 0028)/ Tel. & fax: +27 (12) 342-6216/ E-mail: iskconpt@global.co.za

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◆ **Lome, Togo —** Sis Face Place Bonke, Cote Blue Night, Tokoin Hospital, 01 BP 3105/ Tel. + 228 2217477 or 9028793/ E-mail: varaha.bts@pamho.net
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Mombasa, Kenya — Hare Krishna House, Sauti Ya Kenya and Kisumu Rds. (mail: P.O. Box 82224)/ Tel. +254 (011) 312248
Nairobi, Kenya — Muhuroni Close, off West Nagara Rd. (mail: P.O. Box 28946)/ Tel. +254 (0203) 744365/ Fax: +254 (0203) 740957/ E-mail: iskcon_nairobi@yahoo.com
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Buenos Aires — Restaurante Tulasi, Marcelo T. de Alvear 628, Local 30

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Cochabamba — Av. Heroinas E-435 Apt. 3 (mail: P. O. Box 2070)/ Tel. & fax: +591 (042) 54346
Santa Cruz — Calle 27 de Mayo No. 99 esq. Justo Bazan/ Tel. & fax: +591 (03) 345189

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Bolivia — (contact ISKCON Cochabamba)

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Cochabamba — Restaurant Govinda, calle Mexico #E0303/ Tel. +591 (042) 22568
Cochabamba — Restaurant Tulasi, Av. Heroinas E-262
Oruro — Restaurant Govinda, Calle 6 de Octubre No. 6071
Santa Cruz — Snack Govinda, Calle Bolivar esq. Av. Argomosa (primer anillo)/ Tel. +591 (03) 345189
Sucre — Restaurant Sat Sanga, Calle Tarapacá No. 161/ Tel. +591 (64) 22547

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ADDITIONAL RESTAURANT
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Rising Above the Mind

WHY DO DIFFERENT people respond differently to spiritual life? In *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.10) Lord Kṛṣṇa suggests some psychological reasons: "Being freed from attachment, fear, and anger, being fully absorbed in Me, and taking refuge in Me, many, many persons in the past became purified by knowledge of Me—and thus they all attained transcendental love for Me." Lord Kṛṣṇa says here that to love Him one must be free of the influence of three states of mind: attachment, fear, and anger. Each of these aligns with a major category of persons who lack devotion to Kṛṣṇa: *karmīs,* Māyāvādīs, and *śūnyavādīs.*

The *karmī's* debilitation is attachment to matter. A *karmī* (a person bound up in karma) thinks there is nothing beyond matter and consequently is fully committed to the idea that happiness and success can be found only in material pursuits. Prahlāda Mahārāja labels such persons *gṛha-vratānām*—they have taken the vow (*vrata*) to pursue material life regardless of repeated defeat. The *karmī* refuses to accept spiritual reality and so can never discover his eternal spiritual connection of love with the Supreme Truth.

The Māyāvādīs, or those who conceive of ultimate reality as impersonal, suffer from the neurosis of fear. Their experience in the material world leads them to fear personal relationships. They prefer to think "all is one." If there's ultimately no such thing as unique personal identity, then there's no chance of conflict, abuse, betrayal, rejection, abandonment, or disappointment. In the quest for *śānti,* peace, which they equate with fulfillment, they want to do away with everything that makes for distinctions. But without distinctions, relationships are impossible. And without relationships, true happiness is impossible.

Finally, the *śūnyavādīs,* or those who conceive of the Absolute Truth as nothingness, are spiritually hamstrung by the psychological condition of anger. Confused and frustrated by their inability to grasp spiritual truth, they reject spiritual reality altogether by concluding that nothing exists. This is the conclusion of Buddhism, though many modern adherents are probably unaware of this ultimate aspect of the philosophy they've adopted.

In his purport to *Bhagavad-gītā* 4.10, Śrīla Prabhupāda writes: "One has to get rid of all three stages of attachment to the material world: negligence of spiritual life, fear of a spiritual personal identity, and the conception of void that arises from frustration in life. To get free from these three stages of the material concept of life, one has to take complete shelter of the Lord, guided by the bona fide spiritual master, and follow the disciplines and regulative principles of devotional life."

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu appeared five hundred years ago to teach us how to develop love for God. One of the beneficiaries of His direct instruction was His disciple Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, who laid out the stages through which a serious student will pass on the way to the exalted goal of true love for God: initial faith, association with pure devotees, performance of regulated devotional practices, freedom from material attachment, steadiness in self-realization, a taste for Kṛṣṇa conscious activities, deepening attachment to Kṛṣṇa, spiritual ecstasy, and finally *premā,* the highest perfection in love of God.

Under the guidance of Lord Caitanya and His representatives, we can overcome the incapacitating effects of attachment, fear, and anger. *Bhakti* delivers what persons suffering from these influences are really searching for—a variety-filled existence replete with eternal spiritual relationships that never let you down.

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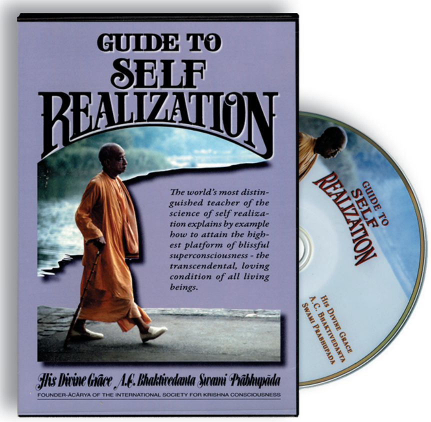
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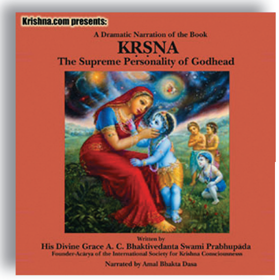
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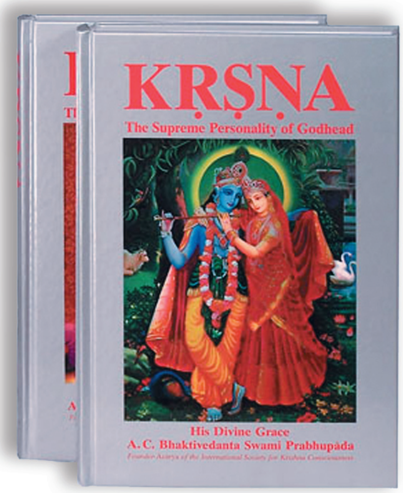
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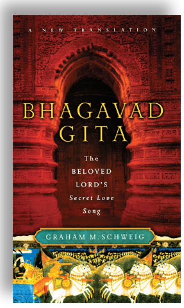
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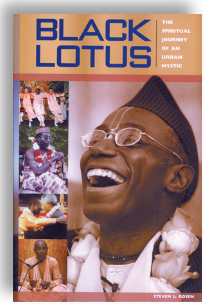
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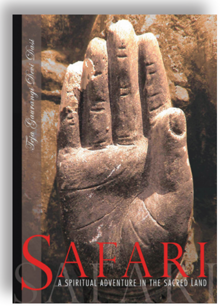
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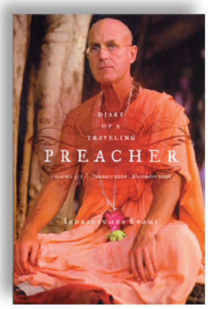
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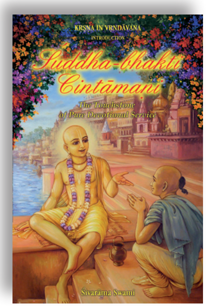
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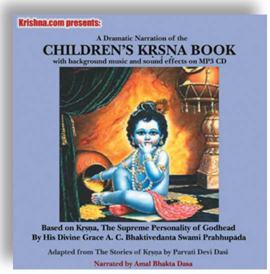
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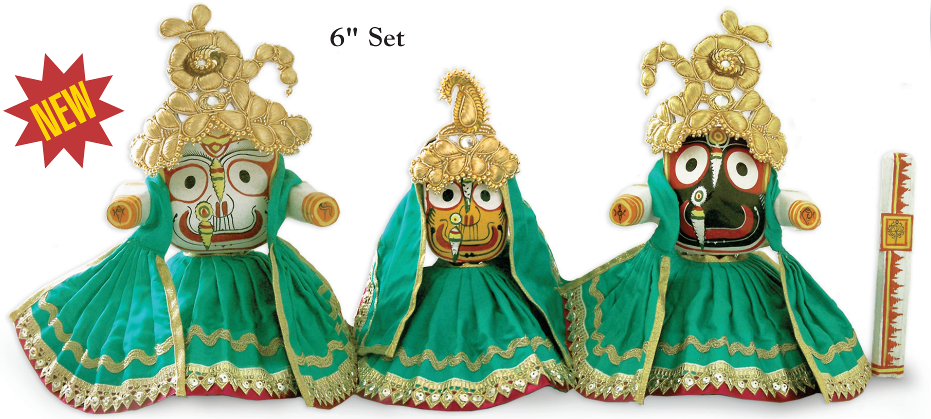

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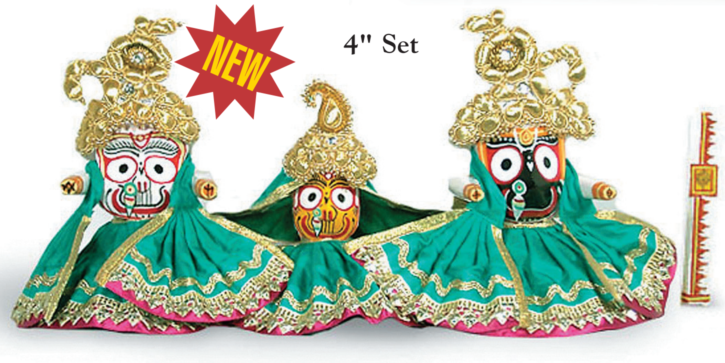

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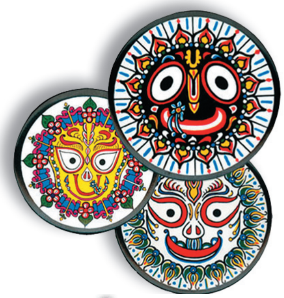

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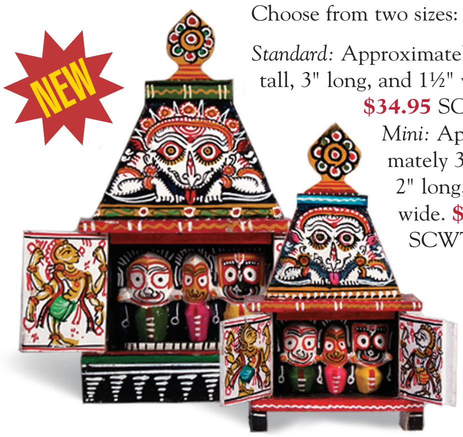

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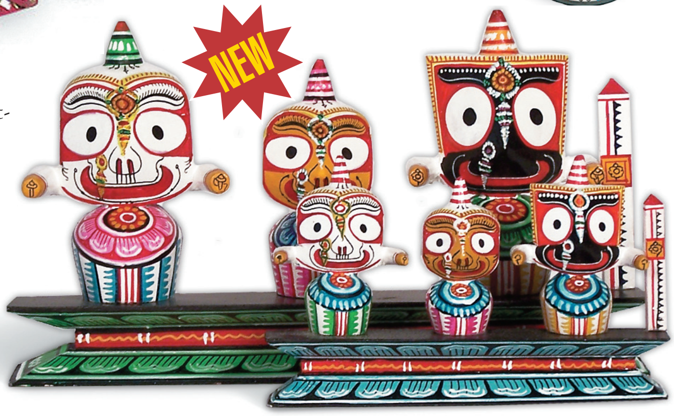

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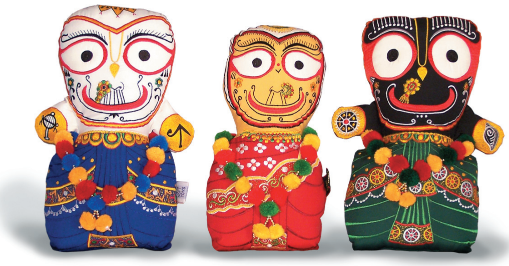

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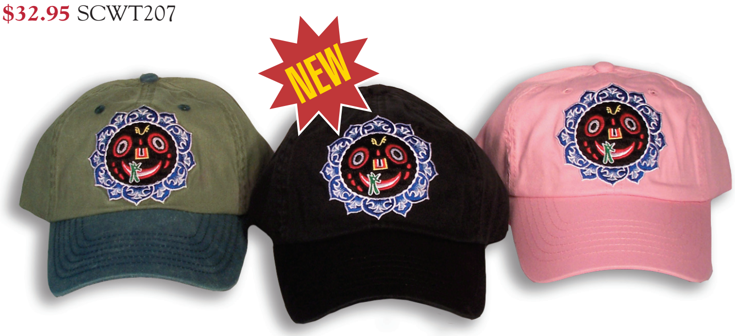

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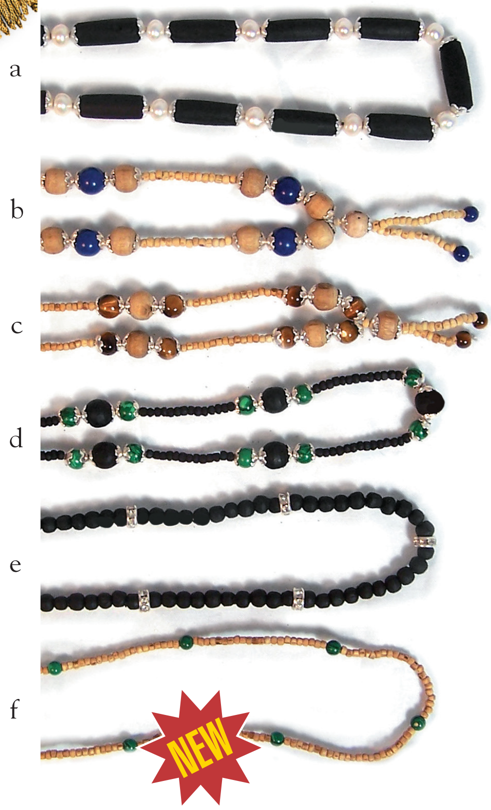

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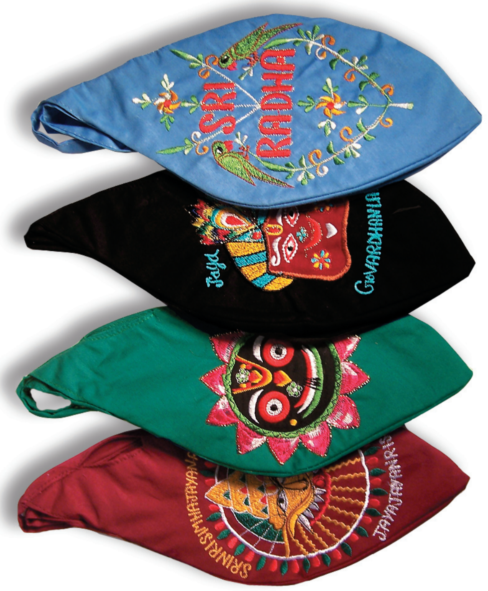

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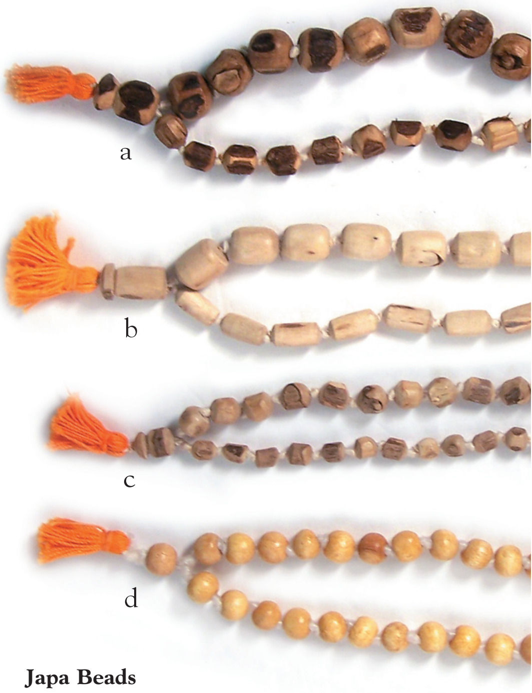

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His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 4.29.46, Purport

The speculative argument of philosophers—"This world is real," "No, it is not real"—is based upon incomplete knowledge of the Supreme Soul and is simply aimed at understanding material dualities. Although such argument is useless, persons who have turned their attention away from Me, their own true Self, are unable to give it up.

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.22.34

O Nāciketā, when a drop of pure water is thrown into a reservoir of pure water, the drop does not change its nature in any way. Similarly, the individual living entity, when situated in transcendental knowledge, does not change his nature when he comes into contact with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but retains his individuality in all respects.

Kaṭha Upaniṣad 2.1.15

"Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare." This is the *mahā-mantra.* All of you go and chant this mantra according to a prescribed number. By doing so, everyone will attain all perfection. Always chant; there is no other prescription.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu
Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata Madhya 23.76–78

Dearer to the Lord than even His own beautiful form, His easily worshiped holy name benefits the entire world. Indeed, nothing is as full of nectar as the holy name of the Lord.

Associates of Lord Viṣṇu
Śrī Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta (Part 2) 3.184

Kṛṣṇa gives, Kṛṣṇa takes, and Kṛṣṇa maintains everyone. Kṛṣṇa protects and Kṛṣṇa kills whenever He desires. The desires of one opposed to the desires of Kṛṣṇa will never be fulfilled. Such a person achieves only misery. Give up all lamentation and hear the name of Kṛṣṇa; then you will feel ecstasy and your desires will be fulfilled.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura
Śoka-satana

In many, many transcendental forms, the one Supreme Personality of Godhead is eternally engaged in relationships with His unalloyed devotees.

Puruṣa-bodhinī Upaniṣad

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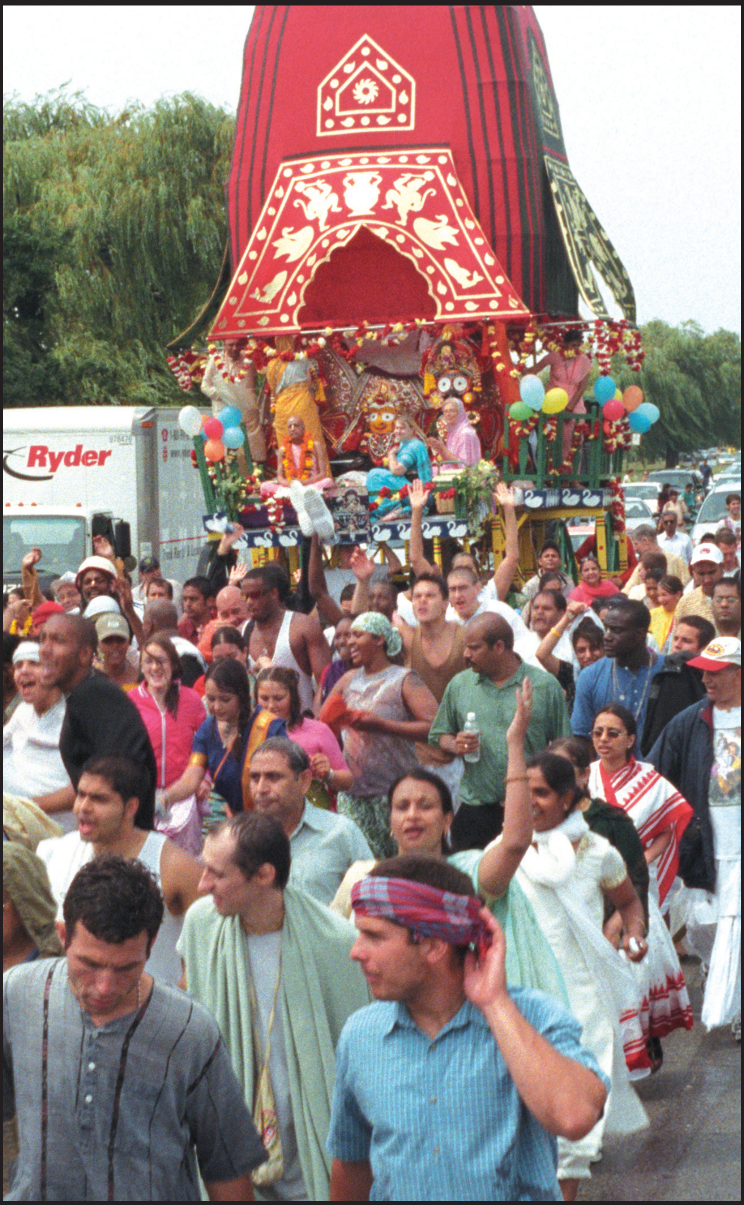
August 11–12: Vancouver Rathayātrā
August 19: San Francisco Rathayātrā
August 25–26: Palmdale, California, Rathayātrā
September 1–2: Seattle Rathayātrā
September 3–5: Vancouver Janmāṣṭamī and Vyāsa Pūjā Festival
September 15: Newark, New Jersey, Rathayātrā
September 22: Philadelphia Rathayātrā
October 21: Washington, D.C., Rāma Vijayotsava

IMPORTANT NOTE: Some of these dates are not yet confirmed. Before scheduling your travel, be sure to confirm the festival dates with the ISKCON temple in the city where the festival is to be held (see Centers, p. 57). Or e-mail Festival of India: madhuha@festivalofindia.org.



Bob Roberts

2005 Detroit Rathayātrā